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CANADA'S HISTORY
THE DUST BOWL

On the cover

A man braces himself against a dust storm near Lethbridge, Alberta, during the dirty thirties.

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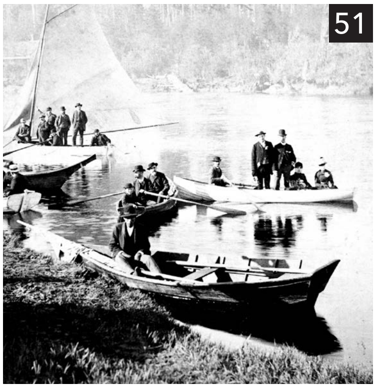

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PHOTO TOP LEFT: ANDREW WORKMAN

A real dry spell

Back in the early 2000s, I found myself driving west across the country to start a new job as a reporter for the *Calgary Herald*.

As a Maritimer, I was eager to see the prairies; I had heard about the endless skies and the expansive plains — but the tales hadn't done them justice.

Stopping for fuel, I decided to call my parents. My dad was a farmer, and we chatted about the differences between the farms back in Nova Scotia and what I was seeing along the way.

One of the stranger sights I had come across was a spindly metal framework that stretched for dozens of metres over some of the fields. I knew we certainly didn't use it on farms back home. My dad suggested it was probably used for irrigation.

Irrigation? In the Maritimes, you rarely needed to water your fields. Every week or so, thick grey clouds would roll in and douse them with rain. Most farms needed better drainage, not irrigation.

Things were clearly different on the prairies. I soon learned that weeks could pass without precipitation, especially in southern Alberta and Saskatchewan and in southwestern Manitoba.

This region, known historically as the Palliser Triangle, is especially arid. It was named for John Palliser, who was recruited in 1857 by the British government to ascertain whether the southern prairies were fit for farming. Palliser described an unforgiving landscape, susceptible to drought — but that didn't deter thousands of settlers in the late 1800s from accepting offers of free land in exchange for a promise to till the soil.

As I read this issue's cover story, I wondered how many of these homesteading families were forced to abandon their farms during the dust bowl era. As historian Bill Waiser explains in "Darkness at Noon," during the 1930s drought devastated the region, baking the soil until it blew away in massive dust storms. The climate catastrophe created thousands of environmental refugees.

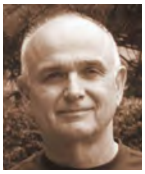
Speaking of refugees, our other feature, "The Country of Half Welcomes," examines Canada's checkered record of aiding refugees.

Over the centuries, Canada has both helped and hindered those who have sought refuge in our country. Both feature articles are reminders of the need to show generosity and compassion to those whose lives have been unexpectedly upended.

Mark Reid

CONTRIBUTORS

Bill Waiser, author of "Darkness at Noon," is a Western Canadian historian. He has published more than a dozen books, many of them recognized as award-winners. *A World We Have Lost: Saskatchewan Before 1905* won a 2016 Governor General's Literary Award for non-fiction. Waiser is a frequent public speaker and media contributor. He has also served on national, provincial, and local boards. Waiser has been appointed to the Order of Canada, awarded the Saskatchewan Order of Merit, elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, named a distinguished university professor, and granted a D.Litt.



George Melnyk wrote "The Country of Half Welcomes." His parents came to Canada as refugees in 1949. He is professor emeritus of communication, media, and film at the University of Calgary. Melnyk is the author or editor of twenty-five books, with a specialty in Canadian studies and Canadian cinema. He is co-editing a book titled *Canada and Refugees: Stories of Hope and Resilience*. He lives in Calgary.

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Uplifting history

I just finished reading Marilyn Dickson's wonderful article about Eileen Vollick ("Unacquainted with Fear," June-July 2018). One of the reasons I love your publication is the stories that surprise and delight me, and this was one of those stories. Imagine the courage of that young woman, facing down (and standing up to!) the establishment of the time to pursue her dream of flying! Dickson painted a fascinating, and no doubt accurate, account of Eileen Vollick's rebellious accomplishment. Let's have more stories like this!

Laurie Hellens
Etobicoke, Ontario

Inspiring veteran

I recall seeing La Maison des Canadiens (Currents, "Homeward Bound," April-May 2018) on a family trip to Normandy, France, in 1988, but I could never have known that when I moved to Gibsons, British Columbia, seven years later I would become a neighbour to the man who "threw that grenade in the basement" (in 1944). For as long as Ernie Kells could walk, push a walker, or, eventually, ride a scooter to the mailbox, he greeted one and all with a cheerful wave. He and his wife, a Dutch war bride, are gone now but are fondly remembered.

Barbara E. Cochran
Gibsons, British Columbia

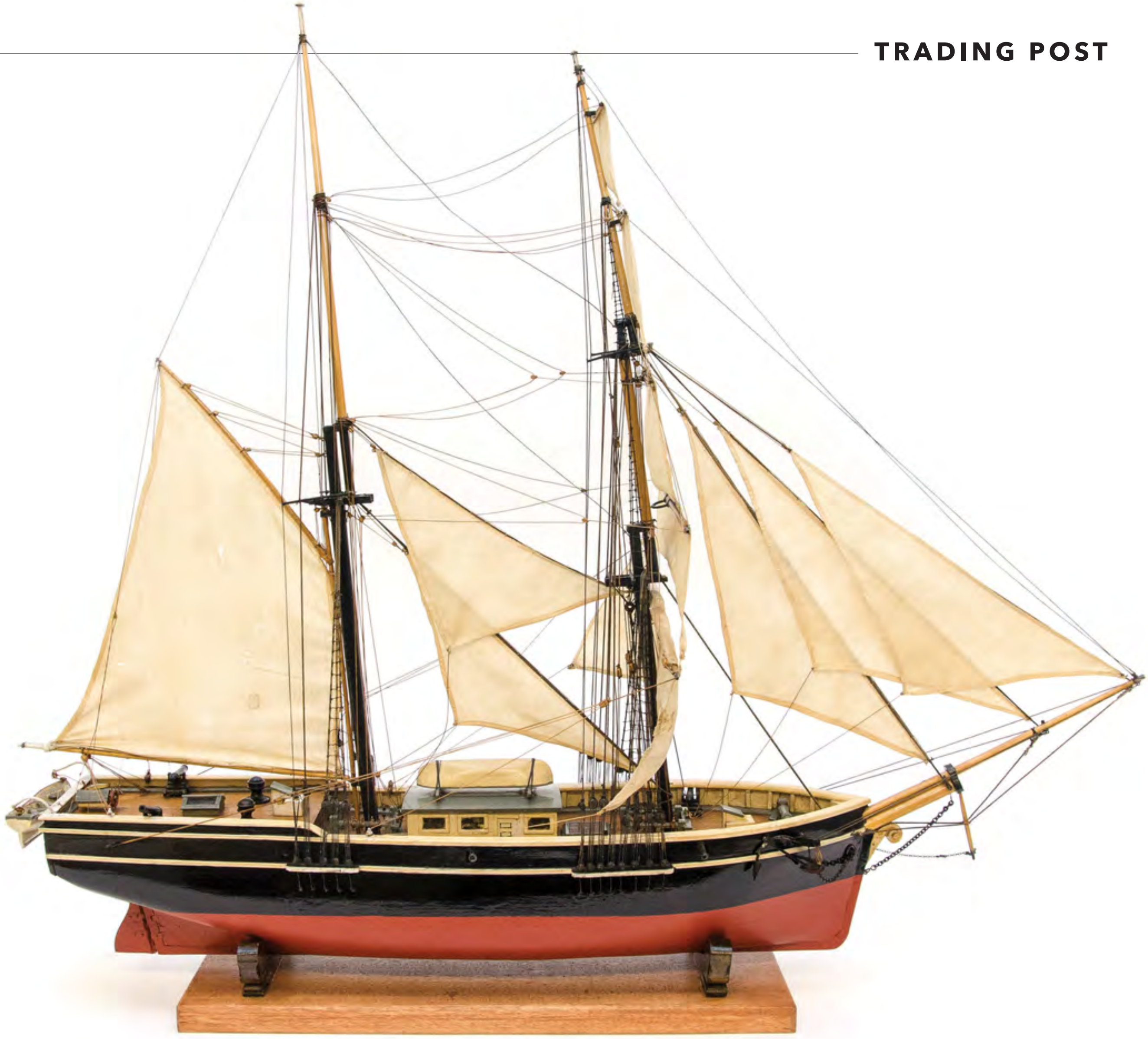
Searching for Vikings

I greatly enjoyed Birgitta Wallace's February-March 2018 article "Finding Vinland." I found it to be very interesting, and it stirred my imagination. I was wondering if it would be possible for your people to find someone with access to satellite photography? If that person could modify the search programs that they use to look for archaeological sites and to include the shape and size of Viking long ship houses used in Newfoundland, Greenland, and Iceland, they might find something interesting. I hope that you find my idea about satellite photography useful and that you can find someone to do the work.

Bruce Breneol
via email

Editor's note: The Balmoral Grist Mill near Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia, was powered by a water turbine. Incorrect information appeared in an April-May 2018 Destinations article. In the June-July 2018 article "Unacquainted with Fear," Joyce Miles is described as the sister of pilot Eileen Vollick. She was actually her daughter.

During the fur trade era, outposts regularly received "packets" of correspondence. Email your comments to editors@CanadasHistory.ca or write to Canada's History, Bryce Hall Main Floor, 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9 Canada.



Schooner model

Tales and Treasures from the rich legacy of the Hudson's Bay Company

ARTIFACT FROM THE MANITOBA MUSEUM (HBC 2729) / PHOTO BY ANDREW WORKMAN

The schooner *Cadboro* (sometimes spelled *Cadborough*) was built in Rye, England, in 1824 for the Hudson's Bay Company's Pacific trade. She arrived at Fort Vancouver on May 24, 1827, and was then used to explore the lower coast of California. Aside from her trading activities, the *Cadboro* went on some interesting adventures. In 1840, the vessel accompanied the SS *Beaver* to Sitka, Alaska, and later she was chartered by the U.S. Navy to take the crew of the wrecked schooner *Shark* to California. She carried on with trade until her sale in 1861; the following year she was wrecked in a gale. This model was commissioned by the HBC and built by Alan Coburn of Nanaimo, British Columbia, in the 1930s. Coburn made a number of models for display in the company's Winnipeg museum. After many years on loan to the Maritime Museum of British Columbia, the models have returned to Winnipeg. They will be displayed in the new upper balcony of the Nonsuch Gallery at the Manitoba Museum in an exhibit celebrating the HBC's rich nautical history.

—*Amelia Fay, curator of the HBC Collection at the Manitoba Museum*

HUDSON'S BAY

The Beaver magazine was originally founded as a Hudson's Bay Company publication in 1920. To read stories from past issues, go to **CanadasHistory.ca/Archive**. To explore the history of the Hudson's Bay Company, go to **hbcheritage.ca**, or follow HBC's Twitter and Instagram feeds at **@HBCHeritage.**

The *Nonsuch* replica is one of the Manitoba Museum's most popular artifacts and is the centrepiece of the newly reopened Nonsuch Gallery.

ANDREW WORKMAN

NEWS

Anchors aweigh

The Manitoba Museum gives new life to its Nonsuch Gallery. *by Alison Nagy*

This June, 350 years after the *Nonsuch* first set sail, the Manitoba Museum reopened its Nonsuch Gallery, turning the ship's story on its head.

In June 1668 the *Nonsuch* sailed from Gravesend, England, to Hudson Bay. The sixteen-metre ketch was tasked with finding a fur-trading route into British North America that was more efficient than the established yet complicated route along the St. Lawrence River. After a very successful trade season with the Cree of Hudson Bay, the *Nonsuch* returned to England laden with furs. This success led to the formation of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Three hundred years later, a replica of the *Nonsuch* was constructed in England. Commissioned by the HBC, she was built to be as historically accurate as possible. After three seasons touring along the English Channel, the St. Lawrence River, the Great Lakes, and the west coast of British Columbia and Washington State, the ketch was brought to Winnipeg and gifted to the province of Manitoba.

Since 1973, this replica has made berth at the Manitoba Museum. Inspired by a suggestion from Captain Adrian Small, who helmed the replica throughout her tour, the museum's interpretation of the *Nonsuch* centred on the final preparations for the original vessel's 1668 voyage.

In the museum's newly reopened Nonsuch Gallery, the ship has just returned to England, and is filled with furs from successful trading. Sailors share tales of the "new world" and the winter they spent at the mouth of the Rupert River (modern-day Waskaganish, Quebec).

The river was named for Prince Rupert, a major investor in both the *Nonsuch*'s voyage and the HBC. As the company's first governor, he also lent his name to Rupert's Land — a large portion of present-day Canada that was awarded to the HBC by a royal charter without consideration of the land claims of its Indigenous population.

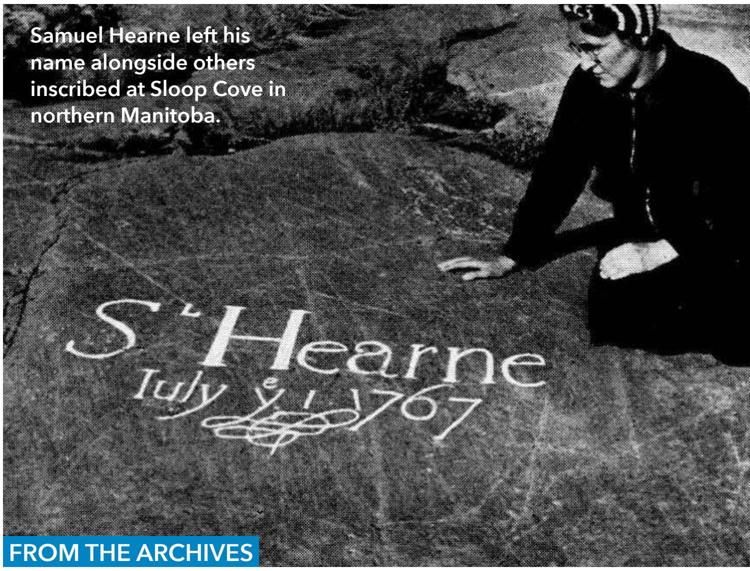
Top left: The Nonsuch Gallery at the Manitoba Museum was closed for nearly a year to complete refurbishments. Top right: The *Nonsuch* replica underwent restorations to its rigging to ensure historical accuracy. Bottom: Interpretive displays throughout the Nonsuch Gallery were updated.

The *Nonsuch*'s interpretation received significant updates, and the ketch had her rigging restored, led by historical rigger Courtney Anderson — who has worked on ships around the world, including on the film series *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

When the *Nonsuch* replica first arrived in Winnipeg in November 1973, it was hoisted into position using a heavy-lift crane. The steel and concrete walls of the gallery were then built around her, sealing her in.

Since a return to the waterways isn't in the cards, this popular artifact can only be seen at the Manitoba Museum.

The Nonsuch Gallery's revival marks the beginning of the museum's ambitious capital renewal project, Bringing Our Stories Forward, which will update more than forty percent of its galleries and emphasize stories of Indigenous peoples and new waves of immigration to Manitoba. A new Winnipeg Gallery and additional digital and interactive exhibits will add to visitors' experiences.

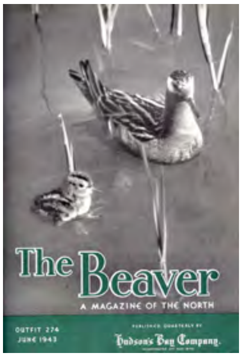


Samuel Hearne left his name alongside others inscribed at Sloop Cove in northern Manitoba.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Inland mariners

The June 1943 issue of *The Beaver* shows that waterways have been crucial not only for the wildlife featured on the magazine's cover but also for the people who have lived in and traversed this country.

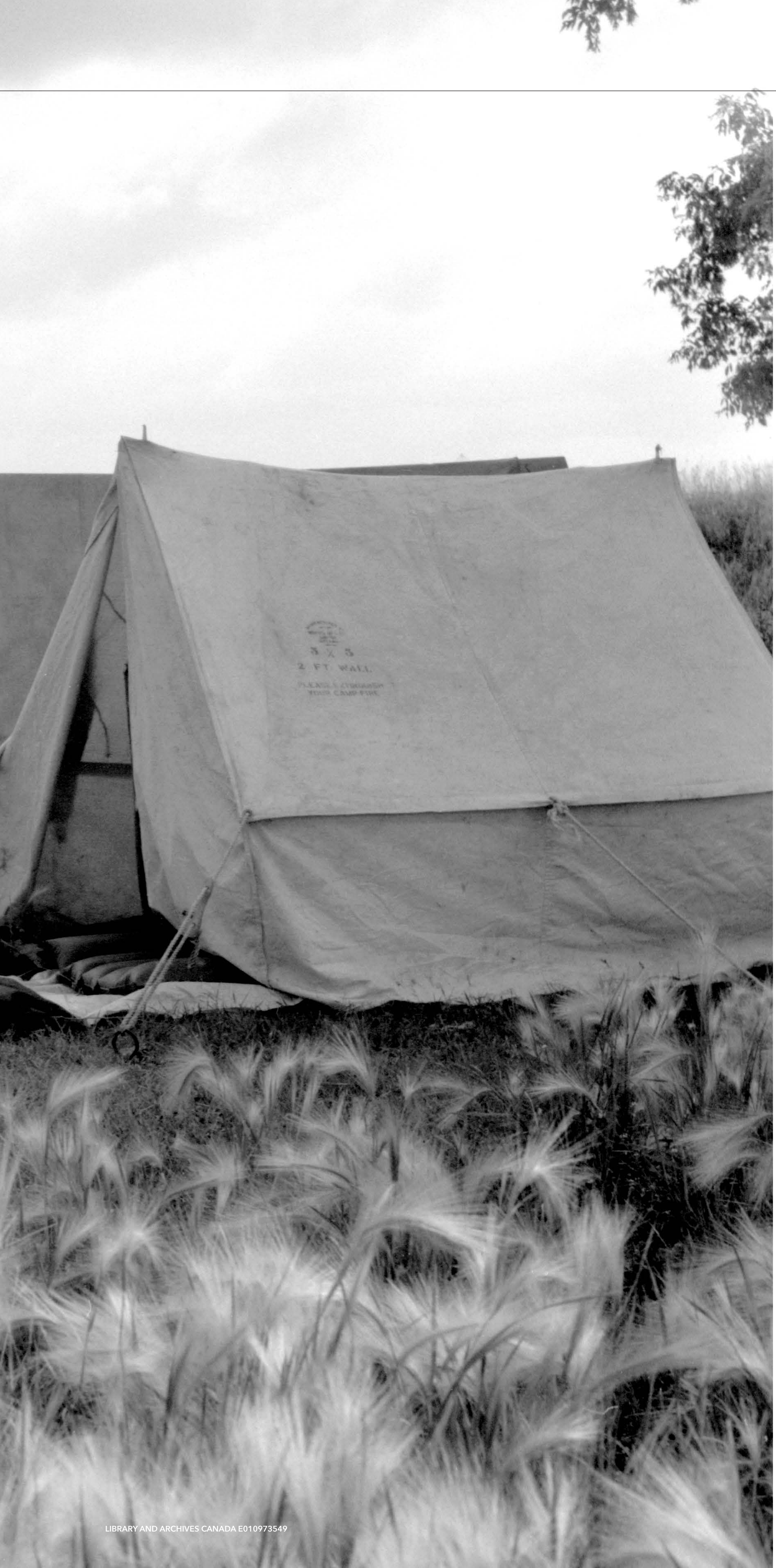


Trevor Lloyd wrote about the huge Hudson's Bay Company barges that were used on the Mackenzie River to bring supplies to the North. He called them "floating warehouses" and said the river steamers "would be powerless to move the great quantities of freight that are annually sent north without the aid of the less picturesque, unassuming, dull red barges."

In the same issue, A.J. Dalrymple marvelled at the steamboats that plied the Saskatchewan River in the late 1800s. And C. Parnell told about "timber cruising" — estimating an area's "merchantable" timber — in the lands around Ontario's Lake Temagami. In winter, Parnell wrote, "lakes and rivers, instead of being barriers, made the best possible travelling surfaces."

Eva Beckett's photos from Sloop Cove — at Churchill, Manitoba — show inscriptions left by some of the men who worked there or spent the winter during voyages of exploration. And a photo essay about Manitoba's Lower Fort Garry shows a commemorative marker for the signing of Treaty No. 1 as well as a "grand pageant" held there to celebrate the HBC's 250th anniversary. — *Phil Koch*

The Canada's History Archive featuring *The Beaver* was made possible with the generous support of the Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation. Visit **CanadasHistory.ca/Archive** to read ninety-plus years of stories.



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PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY

Trans-Canada travels

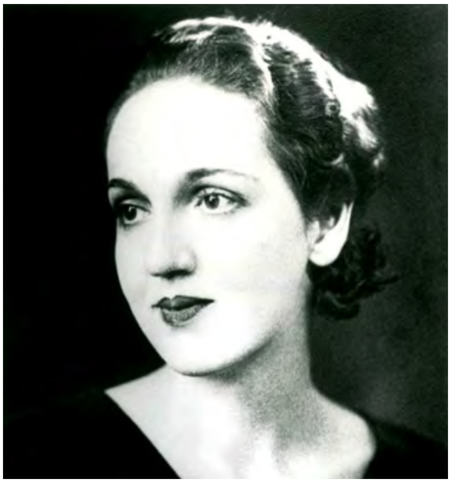
This photo was taken outside of Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, in the summer of 1954 by Rosemary Gilliat. A freelance photographer and then-recent emigrant from England, Gilliat documented — in more than eight hundred photographs — her thirty-eight-day trans-Canada trip from Ottawa to Vancouver. Though campgrounds were gaining popularity by the 1950s, and roadside motels were popping up across the country, Gilliat and the three girlfriends with whom she travelled sought secluded areas off the highway to make camp. Gilliat did not want to travel thousands of kilometres "to have all the luxuries they have at home in a different setting."

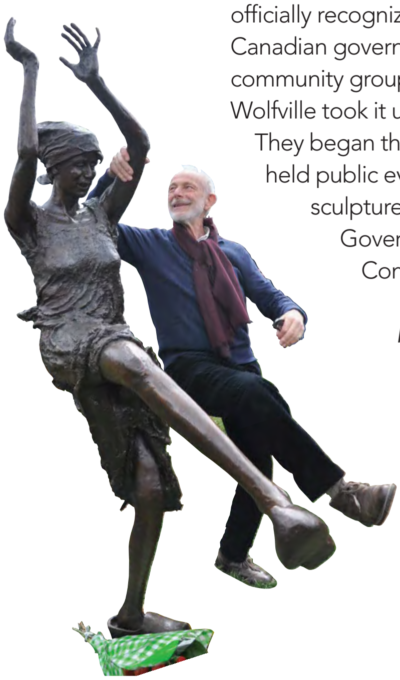
In post-Second World War Canada, economic growth made automobiles more affordable, and romance for the open road flourished alongside the desire for roads on which to travel. The *Trans-Canada Highway Act*, passed in 1949, provided millions of dollars in federal cost-sharing funding to the provinces. What eventually resulted was the Trans-Canada Highway, cobbled together from various existing and newly built roadways across the provinces.

But in 1954 Gilliat and her friends experienced a highway very much under construction, encountering areas that were little more than a rutted dirt track or towering rocky lanes through the mountains of British Columbia. The Trans-Canada Highway would not be formally opened until 1962.

Gilliat continued her work as a freelance photographer after the trip, taking photographs for, among others, *Canadian Geographic*, *Maclean's*, the National Film Board, and even *The Beaver* magazine.

— *Alison Nagy*





Left: Nazi officers in The Hague, Netherlands, in 1940. Above: Mona Parsons circa 1929. Below: Sculptor Nistal Prem de Boer dances with the statue he created in honour of Parsons: *The Joy is Almost Too Much to Bear*.

PUBLIC DOMAIN. COURTESY ANDRIA HILL-LEHR.

COMMUNITY

Cast in bronze

A war hero and Nazi prison camp escapee is remembered in Nova Scotia. *by Marianne Helm*

The epitaph on the headstone in the Willowbank Cemetery in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, identifies her simply as a "wife." But dedicated community members wanted the world to know that Mona Parsons was so much more — that she was a Second World War hero.

Parsons, who was born in Middleton, Nova Scotia, in 1901, was living in the Netherlands with her Dutch first husband when German troops invaded. As part of an informal resistance, she and her husband risked their lives to save Allied airmen shot down in occupied Holland. They hid the men in their home to help them evade the Nazis, but in 1941 the scheme was discovered. Parsons was arrested and sentenced to death.

At her sentencing she accepted her fate with such unwavering certitude that the judge suggested she appeal the ruling. Ultimately, she was sentenced to life in prison camps. After four years she defied the odds and escaped.

"Though she never wore a uniform or carried a gun, she put her life on the line for justice … and she very nearly forfeited her life for those principles" said Andria Hill-Lehr, who wrote a book about Parsons.

Parsons's dramatic escape from a Nazi prison camp was aided by a nearby Allied bomb explosion. After walking for three weeks she found friendly forces with a connection to home — the North Nova Scotia Highlanders.

She was finally free, but soon after the war her husband died. Parsons moved back to Nova Scotia and remarried. After her second husband died, she returned to Wolfville and led a quiet life until her death in 1976. Hill-Lehr believes Parsons exhibited symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Both the British and the American governments have officially recognized Parsons for her bravery, but to date the Canadian government has not done so. Hill-Lehr and the local community groups Wolfville Historical Society and Women of Wolfville took it upon themselves to tell Parsons's story.

They began the Mona Parsons Commemoration Project, held public events, and commissioned a 2.4-metre bronze sculpture. The project was shortlisted for the 2017 Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Community Programming.

The statue — entitled *The Joy is Almost Too Much to Bear* and sculpted by Dutch-Canadian artist Nistal Prem de Boer — was unveiled on May 5, 2017, in Wolfville.

Hill-Lehr believes a civilian woman is just as worthy of honour as those who registered to fight in the war and hopes that "for years to come the sculpture encourages people to stop [and] learn Mona Parsons's story" and be inspired by humanity's ability to triumph over hardship.

NEWS

Residential school remembered

Saskatchewan's Muskowekwan First Nation hopes to preserve the former residential school building that sits on its land. The purpose-built residential school building opened in 1931 and has been empty since the school closed in 1997. While many communities chose to destroy their residential school buildings, more than three hundred former students want the building at Lestock, Saskatchewan, 125 kilometres northeast of Regina, preserved as a museum and a site of memory for all Canadians. The building was included on the National Trust for Canada's 2018 Top 10 Endangered Places List.

Read more at CanadasHistory.ca/Top10Endangered

NEWS

Canada's History CEO recognized

Janet Walker, President and CEO of Canada's National History Society, received the Distinguished Alumni Award at the University of Winnipeg's 2018 Spring Convocation. It is the highest award offered by the University of Winnipeg Alumni Association. Walker completed her bachelor of arts in English from the University of Winnipeg in 1978. Since 2014 Walker's executive and fundraising skills have helped to shape Canada's National History Society.

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION, CANADA'S HISTORY SOCIETY, CANADIAN PRESS

BY THE NUMBERS

Montreal Expos

Youppi!, the Montreal Expos' mascot.

The team that brought us "The Spaceman," "The Kid," "The Rock," and "The Hawk" is marking a half century since its founding. First taking to the field for the 1969 season, the Montreal Expos had a strong player-development system in the 1980s and the best record in baseball going into the 1994 players strike. Unfortunately for the Expos, the remainder of that season was cancelled, and the team never regained that level of success. In 2005 the Montreal Expos franchise was moved, becoming the Washington Nationals.

2,753

Number of baseball games won by the Expos (with 2,943 losses and four ties).

43

Number of games the Expos played at their second home field, Estadio Hiram Bithorn in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in their final two seasons.

3

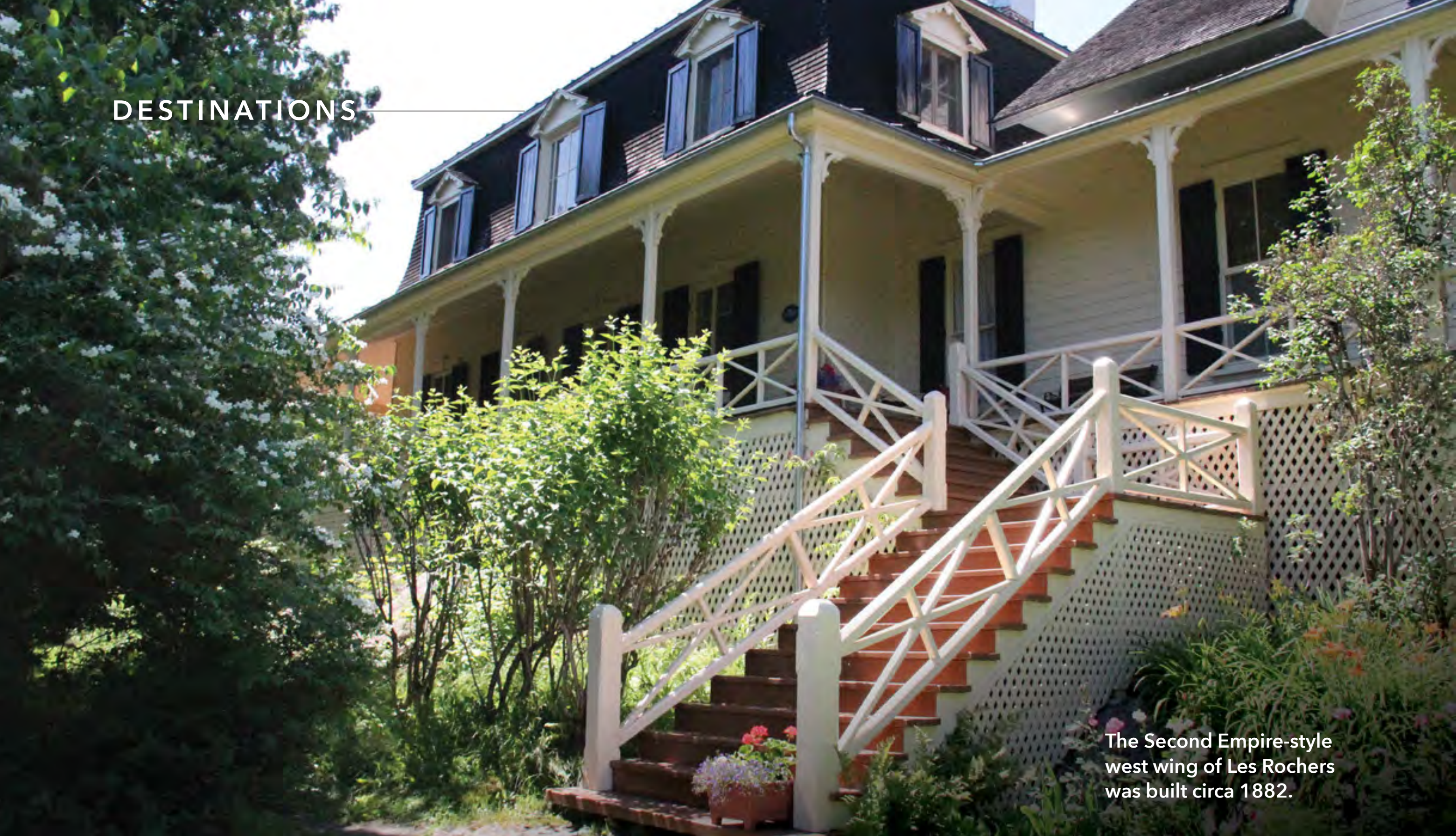
Number of no-hitters pitched by the Expos (two by Bill Stoneman and one by Charlie Lea).

0

Number of National League Pennants and World Series titles won during the Expos' thirty-six seasons.

1989

The year Youppi!, the Expos mascot, became the first in MLB history to be ejected from a ball game, after jumping onto the Los Angeles Dodgers dugout and sneaking into a front-row seat. Youppi! is also credited as the first mascot to change leagues, joining the NHL's Montreal Canadiens in 2005.



The Second Empire-style west wing of Les Rochers was built circa 1882.

Riverside respite

Overnight guests are welcomed at our first prime minister's summer home. *by Peter Black*

WE DIDN'T ACTUALLY SLEEP IN Sir John A. Macdonald's bed, although we could have — or at least one of us could have, since it's not a big bed. It's probably a twin bed by today's standards, and, okay, it was a bit squeaky.

But make no mistake: The bed in a pleasant, high-ceilinged room with a breathtaking view of the St. Lawrence River, in Macdonald's summer residence on the western outskirts of Rivière du Loup, Quebec, is the actual bed where Canada's first prime minister laid his head most summers from 1871 until the year before his death in June 1891.

How do we know that for sure? Karen Molson has the answer. A member of the famous brewing family that created the Canadian Heritage of Quebec (CHQ) foundation, she's done in-depth research into Les Rochers (the rocks), as Sir John named his riverside retreat. The property, now a bed and breakfast, is one of twenty-five in Quebec that are currently under the CHQ's care.

"This bed was found in the basement, and it had Sir John A.'s address painted on it — his Ottawa address — so that's where it was to be shipped eventually," said Molson, an amateur historian, researcher, and author. Her grandfather Jack noted the inscription on a leg of the robin's-egg-blue painted bed frame when the house came into the possession of the CHQ in 1981. (The address was actually for Ottawa's Stadacona Hall, which is today home to the High Commission of Brunei.) It's less certain which of the four spacious upstairs bedrooms was actually the Father of Confederation's sleep chamber, or which room served as his office in the elegant but hardly extravagant house.

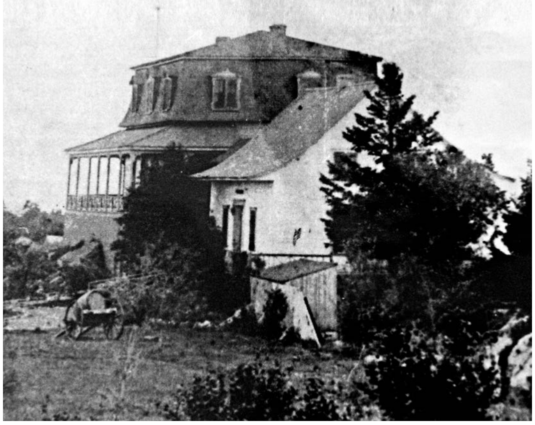
Karen Molson, who has slept several times in the former bed of the "Old Chieftain," declares it sturdy and comfortable. The mattress, of course, is not the original.

Molson has documented how the prime minister and his family — second wife Agnes, mother-in-law Theodora Bernard, and daughter Mary, who was hydrocephalic — first visited Rivière du Loup in 1870. The community offered respite from the fetid conditions of nineteenth-century Ottawa in the summer, as well as from Macdonald's health woes — intestinal, mostly, and undoubtedly worsened by drink.

Molson says Macdonald's cabinet colleague Dr. Charles Tupper prescribed a restorative holiday in Prince Edward Island. On the train ride, the Macdonalds stopped and tarried in Fraserville, as Rivière du Loup was then called. There they took note of the spectacular views and the healthy air of the St. Lawrence. On the journey back they came upon a humble cottage on Fraser Street overlooking the river and arranged to rent it the following summer from a local farmer. Thus began the prime minister's enduring enchantment with Les Rochers.

It was a place to escape the heat of Ottawa as well as the stress and torment of politics. Indeed, during his second summer of residence in Les Rochers, the prime minister went missing for several days while the Pacific Scandal closed in on him. (See my article "Sir John A.'s Lost Weekend" in *The Beaver*, October-November 2007). He often hosted political colleagues and, Molson recently

ANNIE LEFEBVRE/CANADIAN HERITAGE OF QUEBEC



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Les Rochers
Résidence d'Été
Sir John A. Macdonald
Héritage Canadien du Québec
Canadian Heritage of Québec

Above left: Sir John A. Macdonald's summer home, Les Rochers, circa 1883.
Above right: A sign in Rivière du Loup, Quebec, welcomes visitors to Les Rochers.

confirmed, convened a full cabinet meeting at Les Rochers in August 1885.

That the summer home of a Canadian historical figure of the stature of Sir John A. Macdonald should now be available for visitors as a bed and breakfast is a miracle of sorts. The house has had only four private family owners since the original structure was built in the 1840s, which explains why many furnishings, including a piano and a Victrola, have been there for decades.

In 1881, a farmer named Chouinard sold the house and "five acres of rock," as Lady Macdonald put it, for three hundred dollars. The Macdonalds promptly hired an architect to draw up plans to renovate and to expand the house with a large veranda and doorways wide enough for Mary's wheelchair. The newer section now welcomes guests, while staff and volunteers stay in the older quarters. Breakfast is served in the compact sunroom off the veranda.

After Sir John A. died, Lady Macdonald stayed in Les Rochers one last time before selling the residence in 1896 to Thomas Shaughnessy, then vice-president of the Canadian Pacific Railway. It later passed into the hands of the descendants of Sir Henry Bate, a wealthy Ottawa businessman, before ending up with his granddaughter Fay, who married Herbert Symington, the first president of Air Canada predecessor Trans-Canada Airlines.

In 1981, Symington's daughter Margaret Eakin, wishing to unburden herself of the upkeep of Les Rochers, donated it to the CHQ. Her daughter Gael Eakin, a Montreal artist of some renown and the wife of historian Desmond Morton, has vivid memories of idyllic summers spent at the seaside house after her grandparents became the owners. In a conversation in 2015, on the occasion of celebrations in Rivière du Loup to mark the two hundredth anniversary of Macdonald's birth, she recalled spending several summers in the house starting in 1949, when she was nine years old.

Back then, Eakin said, there was an unimpeded view of the shore from the veranda of the house that is perched high on a rocky outcrop. "The view was fantastic. There were paths going back and forth, and there was a path going down the cliff to the field, which I used to walk down with my grandfather. My granny had a picking garden, of which I did a painting as a little girl." The painting is in one of the bedrooms upstairs, and other works by Eakin are found around the house.

The CHQ maintained the house for years and then decided to open it as a bed and breakfast in 1996. Apart from upgrading the kitchen and performing other repairs and maintenance work, the house is essentially the same as when Macdonald spent many summers there.

Eakin says she's very happy that the house that was so special to her is now shared with the public. "I don't know what would have happened to it if it hadn't been a B & B. We're very grateful for the way [the CHQ] has preserved it," she said. "We've come back almost every year. The St. Lawrence River — it's in the blood. I get such a terrible longing, and I need to come back." As did Sir John A. Macdonald.

CANADIAN HERITAGE OF QUEBEC; ANNIE LEFEBVRE/CANADIAN HERITAGE OF QUEBEC

Percé Rock sits just beyond historic buildings on Cap Mont-Joli at Percé, Quebec.

Visiting Quebec heritage sites

Les Rochers, also known as the Sir John A. Macdonald House, is one of two Canadian Heritage of Quebec properties in Rivière du Loup, Quebec. The other is Fraser Manor, the last surviving seigneurial home in the region. It was built in 1829, acquired by the CHQ in 1979, and restored as an interpretive centre in 1996.

The CHQ first began to acquire and to preserve historic properties in 1956 when Colin J.G. "Jack" Molson and his partners – his aunt Mabel Molson and his friend James Beattie – stepped in to save the Hurtubise House in Westmount, Quebec, from demolition.

The non-profit organization then expanded its work to protect heritage sites and buildings around the province.

Properties under the organization's care include a seigneurial domain in Saint-Vallier, near Quebec City, a windmill in Les Éboulements, and a mansion and garden in Hudson, near Montreal.

Besides Les Rochers, two other sites offer overnight stays for paying guests: the Molson-Beattie House in Tadoussac and a group of three seaside houses at Percé, one of which can accommodate up to twelve people.

TREASURES OF CANADA

MUSEUM ARTIFACTS ARE A GATEWAY TO THE PAST.

BY MARK COLLIN REID

ON A CRISP OCTOBER MORNING IN 1812, Major General Sir Isaac Brock awoke at Fort George in Niagara, Upper Canada, to the distant sounds of artillery. Reaching for his uniform, Brock began to methodically do up each brass button of his scarlet officer's jacket. It was a splendid uniform, fit for a man of his rank, featuring dark accents on the sleeves and neck and capped by ringed epaulettes.

Four months earlier, the War of 1812 had erupted between the United States and Britain's North American colonies. Now, on October 13, 1812, an American invasion force was crossing the Niagara River at Queenston Heights in the hopes of striking a decisive blow in the conflict.

Rushing to the scene, Brock saw American troops capturing a British artillery emplacement on the heights. Rallying his men, he led a charge up the hill to retake the position. Suddenly, a musket shot rang out. Struck in the chest by a lead ball, Brock was killed instantly. The hero of the British and Canadian troops was now a martyr.

Today, most vestiges of that centuries-old conflict have faded. Canada and the United States are now the closest of allies, and the War of 1812 has been eclipsed in our collective memory by the conflicts that followed, such as the first and second world wars. And yet, there exists an item that, upon seeing it, brings the war vividly to life for us today.

At the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa, visitors will find a scarlet uniform among the artifacts collection. It's a splendid uniform, fit for a man of high rank — save for one ragged bullet hole in the breast. Two centuries later, Brock's coat (shown on the facing page) survives as a testament to his sacrifice, and as a symbol of the human cost of war. Witnessing it, you can almost hear the crack of the musket and smell the black powder as the lead ball struck the fatal blow.

In an increasingly digital world, artifacts such as Brock's coat help to make history seem more real. They also inspire important conversations about the past: Seeing a Haida carving, we're reminded of the resilience of Indigenous peoples; seeing the "last spike," we're compelled to ponder the sacrifices made to build the Canadian Pacific Railway; seeing a flotation device from the *Titanic*, we're reminded of the fleeting nature of life itself.

Over the next few pages, you'll find more artifacts from Canada's leading museums. They are just a sampling of the rich heritage on display across the country, but we hope that they inspire you to connect more deeply with the past.

Special thanks the following institutions for their assistance: Canadian Museum of History, Canadian War Museum, Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum, Manitoba Museum, Nova Scotia Museum, Royal Alberta Museum, Royal BC Museum, and The Rooms museum.

CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM, CWM1967-0070-009

ROYAL BC MUSEUM

HAIDA FRONTLET

This plaque was once part of a headdress adorned with flicker feathers, sea lion whiskers, and a train of ermine skins. The crouching figure wears a dance apron and crown and may represent a shaman. Chiefs wore headdresses during dances to welcome visitors to their communities. By the time the frontlet was donated to the Royal BC Museum in 1990, the rest of the headdress no longer existed. “Bella Coola” is written on the back of the frontlet, but the distinctive carving style indicates that the artist was Simeon sdiihldaa (1799–1889) of Old Massett, British Columbia. – Courtesy Royal BC Museum

THE MOFFATT STICK

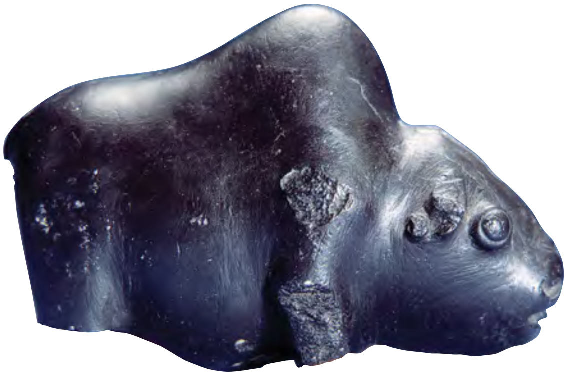
Recognized as the world’s oldest known ice hockey stick, the Moffatt stick was hand hewn by William “Dilly” Moffatt in the 1830s in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, from a single piece of sugar maple. The Moffatt stick is a unique and powerful link to hockey’s earliest days in Canada and a reminder of our nation’s love affair with “the good ol’ hockey game.”

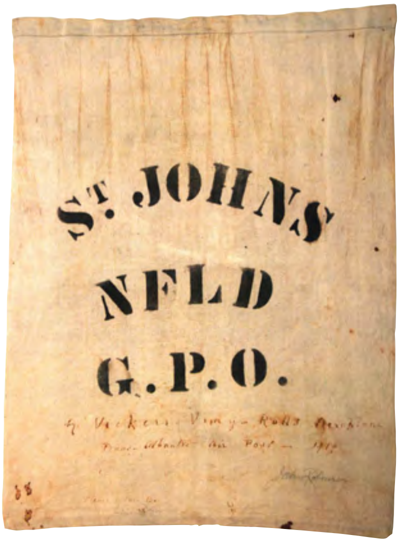
– Courtesy Canadian Museum of History

COURTESY OF THE ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM, THE ROOMS MUSEUM AND PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES, CANADIAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY, 2015-0003-0001-DP1

THE BEAUVALLON

This rare Indigenous coal carving of a bison found near Beauvallon, Alberta, was probably used for ceremonies — either to ensure a successful hunt or to promote the fertility of the bison herds, both of which were critical to the Indigenous people whose survival depended on these animals. The age of the object is unknown. – Courtesy Royal Alberta Museum

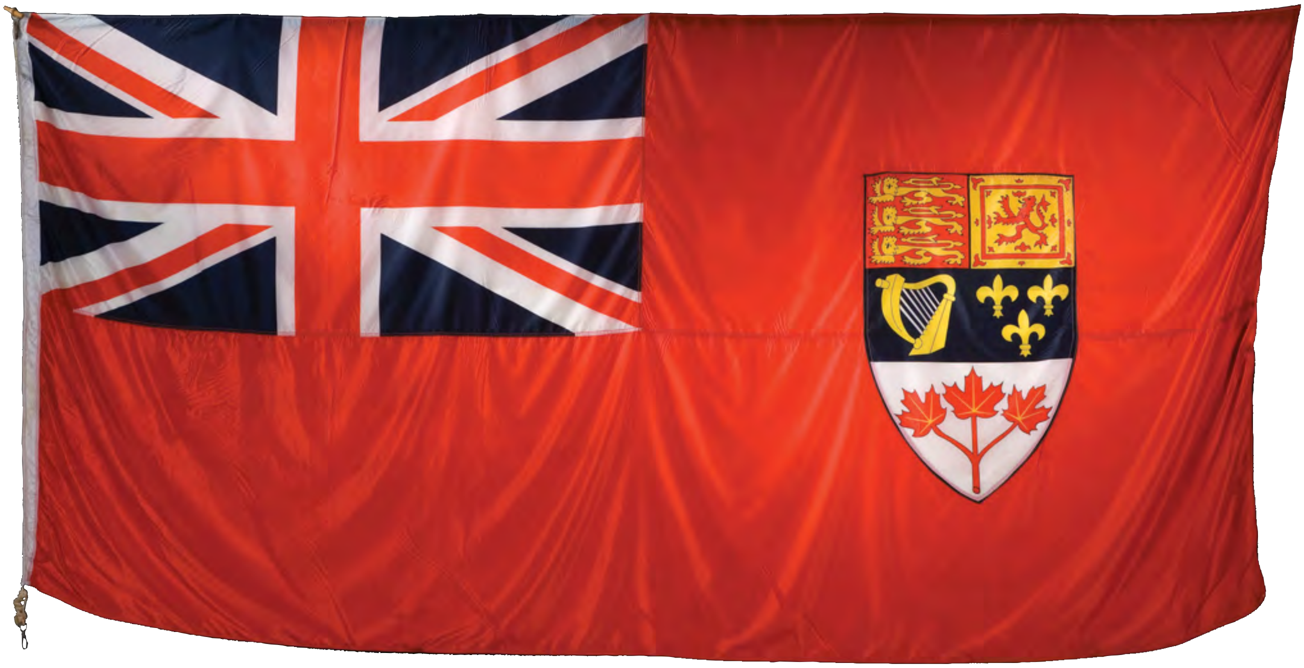




MAILBAG

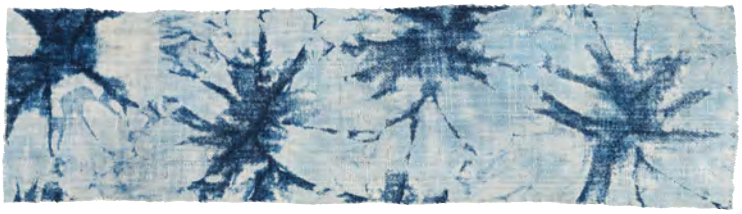
This was the first mailbag carried on a non-stop flight across the Atlantic. Pilot John Alcock and navigator Arthur Brown left St. John’s, Newfoundland, on June 14, 1919, at 1:45 p.m. and landed in Clifden, Ireland, sixteen hours later. The plane was damaged upon landing after they mistook a bog for a field. Alcock and Brown were British aviators who had entered a contest to be the first to fly the Atlantic non-stop. They were knighted a few days after landing.

– Courtesy The Rooms



THE LAST RED ENSIGN

The Red Ensign was unofficially adopted as the flag of the Dominion of Canada shortly after Confederation. This particular Red Ensign flew from the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill until 10:45 a.m. on February 15, 1965, when it was replaced by the new Maple Leaf flag. Many Canadians mourned its passing, but just as many welcomed the new banner, which proclaimed the arrival of a uniquely Canadian identity. Today, the Maple Leaf version is synonymous with Canada. – Courtesy Canadian Museum of History



THE AMISTAD CLOTH

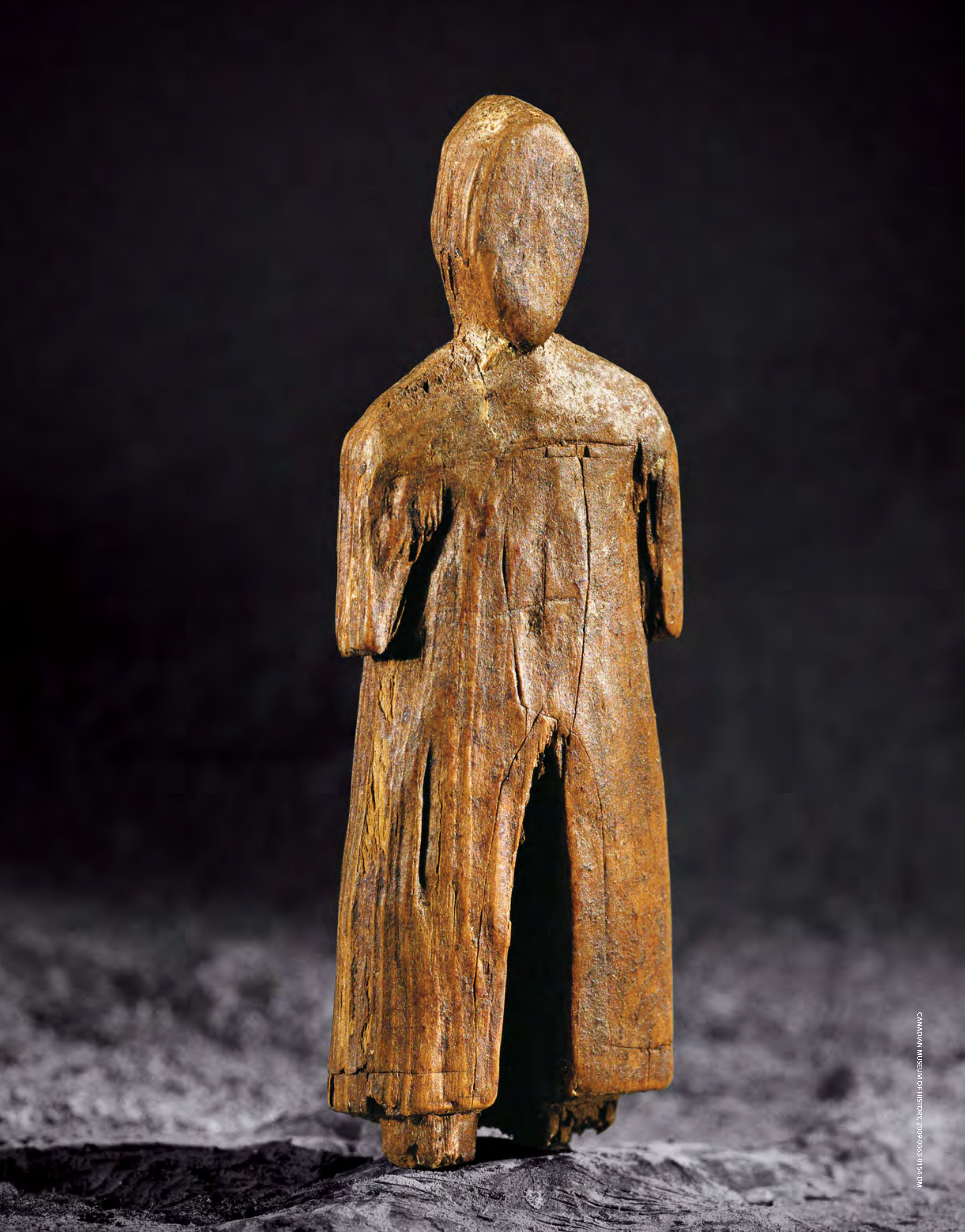
This cloth represents the amazing stories of two remarkable women who survived against great odds and is a direct link to the notorious African slave trading ship *Amistad*. Born in 1817 and from Dempsey Corner, Nova Scotia, Elizabeth Ruggles was one of the province's first missionaries to Africa. She was given this cloth as a gift. It was handmade by Sarah Margru Kinson, a survivor of the *Amistad*. Through her marriage to American evangelist Rev. William Raymond, Ruggles travelled to West Africa in 1842 as a missionary, accompanying freed Africans from the *Amistad*. Kinson gave the cloth to Ruggles during her time at the Kaw Mendi missionary station in West Africa. – Courtesy Nova Scotia Museum

VIMY SCULPTURE ▶

This sculpture is one of a set of seventeen plaster figures created by Walter Allward between 1925 and 1930 in preparation for the Vimy Memorial in France. The Battle of Vimy Ridge took place between April 9 and 12, 1917. The Canadian Corps suffered 10,602 casualties during the attack. Allward said his striking memorial was inspired by a wartime dream, in which he saw Canadians being "mowed down by the sickles of death" but then aided by the dead who "rose in masses" and "entered the fight to aid the living." The memorial, unveiled in 1936, is one of only two national historic sites located outside of Canada. Today, thousands of Canadians travel annually to Vimy Ridge to bear witness to this enduring symbol of sacrifice.
– Courtesy Canadian War Museum

CANADIAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY, 2009-0063-0071-DM. NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM

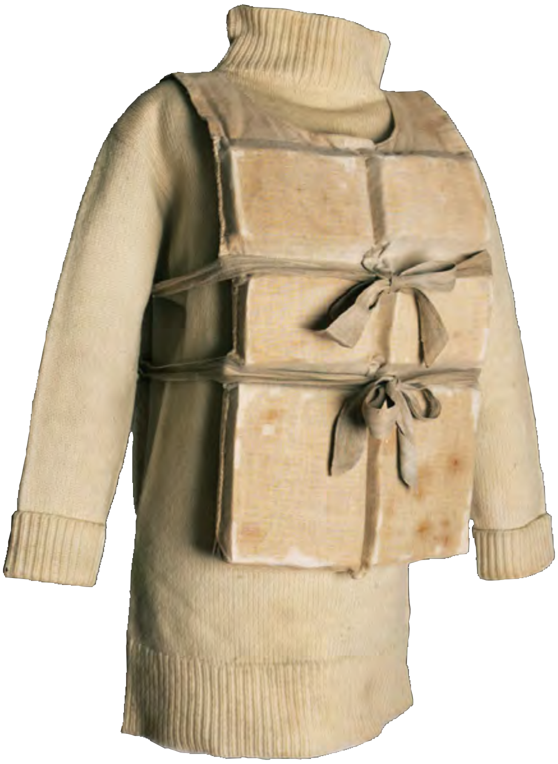
CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM, CWM1977-0315-003



CANADIAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY, 2009-0063-0154-DM

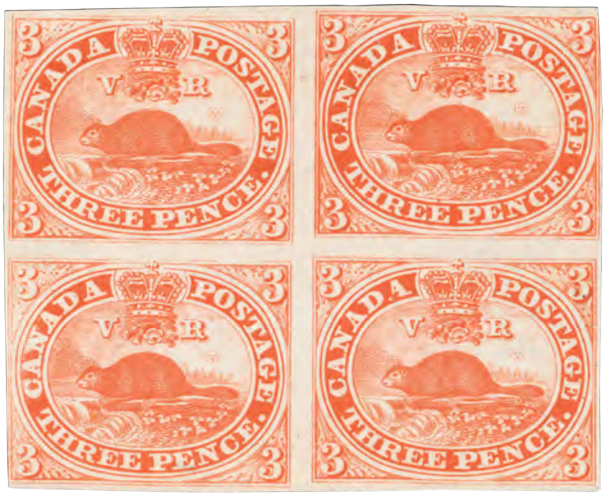
INUIT CARVING OF A EUROPEAN

This small wooden carving was found in an Inuit archaeological site on the south coast of Baffin Island, Nunavut, and has been dated to about AD 1350. Carved in Inuit style, it seems to depict a European, presumably a Norseman, wearing a cloak or surcoat. A cross can be seen faintly incised on the chest.The carving offers tangible evidence of European visits to North America more than a century before the 1492 arrival of Christopher Columbus in the New World. Historians now know that Norse traders regularly visited the Canadian Arctic in search of ivory, particularly from walrus and narwhals. – Courtesy Canadian Museum of History



LIFE JACKET, RMS *TITANIC*

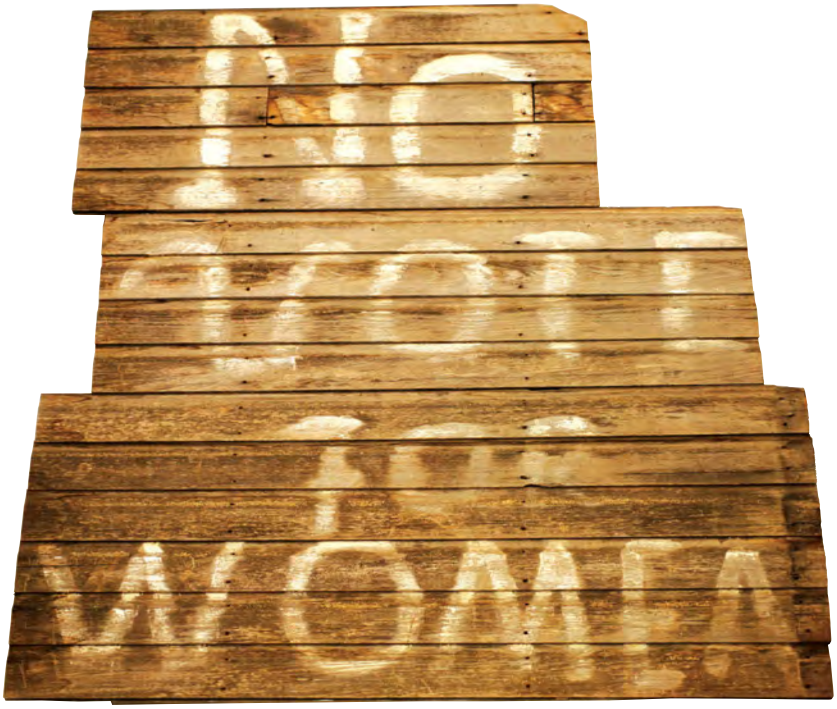
On April 15, 1912, the RMS *Titanic* sank on its maiden voyage across the Atlantic. The “unsinkable” White Star Line’s vessel had been outfitted with 3,560 life jackets — more than enough for the 2,223 people on board. Unfortunately, the frigid waters of the North Atlantic were cold enough to kill within minutes, and many passengers who found themselves in the water perished quickly. In mid-May, the Newfoundland sealing steamer *Algerine* set sail to look for bodies of *Titanic* passengers. The body of James McGrady, a steward aboard the *Titanic*, was the last to be pulled from the water. His life jacket had kept his body afloat for forty-two days. McGrady was buried with other *Titanic* victims in Fairfax Lawn Cemetery in Halifax, Nova Scotia. – Courtesy The Rooms



THREEPENNY BEAVER STAMP

The threepenny beaver stamp, issued in 1851, was not only Canada’s first postage stamp but was also the first stamp in the world that did not feature the image of a head of state. Designer Sandford Fleming instead chose the industrious beaver — a decision that speaks to the desire by British North Americans to nurture a proto-Canadian national identity. However, the stamp also bears symbols that illustrate the Province of Canada’s enduring connection with Britain. The stamp features the royal crown of England on a cushion of heraldic flowers: the English rose, the Scottish thistle, and the Irish shamrock. The VR monogram of Queen Victoria also overhangs the representation of the beaver. Fleming is best known for being the inventor of standard time.
– Courtesy Canadian Museum of History

CANADIAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY, 2009-0063-0009-DM. THE ROOMS PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES DIVISION



ANTI-SUFFRAGE SIGN

This is a section of the exterior wall of a house that formerly stood just north of Portage la Prairie, Manitoba. According to the late Charles Wishert, who lived across the road from the residents of this home, the woman living there painted "VOTE FOR WOMEN" on the side of her house so it could be seen from the road. When her husband arrived home after work, he painted "NO" above her sign. The wall section was saved from demolition in the 1990s by Ian Wishert, grandson of Charles Wishert. Women in Manitoba gained the vote in provincial elections in 1916, while the right to vote federally was given to some Canadian women in 1917. – Courtesy Manitoba Museum

THE MCGEE PISTOL

This handgun was found in the pocket of Patrick James Whelan on April 8, 1868, the day after Father of Confederation Thomas D'Arcy McGee was assassinated on the streets of Ottawa. Identified as the murder weapon, it was a key piece of evidence in the case against Whelan, who despite some uncertainty over his guilt, was convicted and hanged for the crime. McGee's death rallied Canadians against the Fenians — Irish Americans who attacked Canada in the hopes of winning Irish independence from Britain. – Courtesy Canadian Museum of History

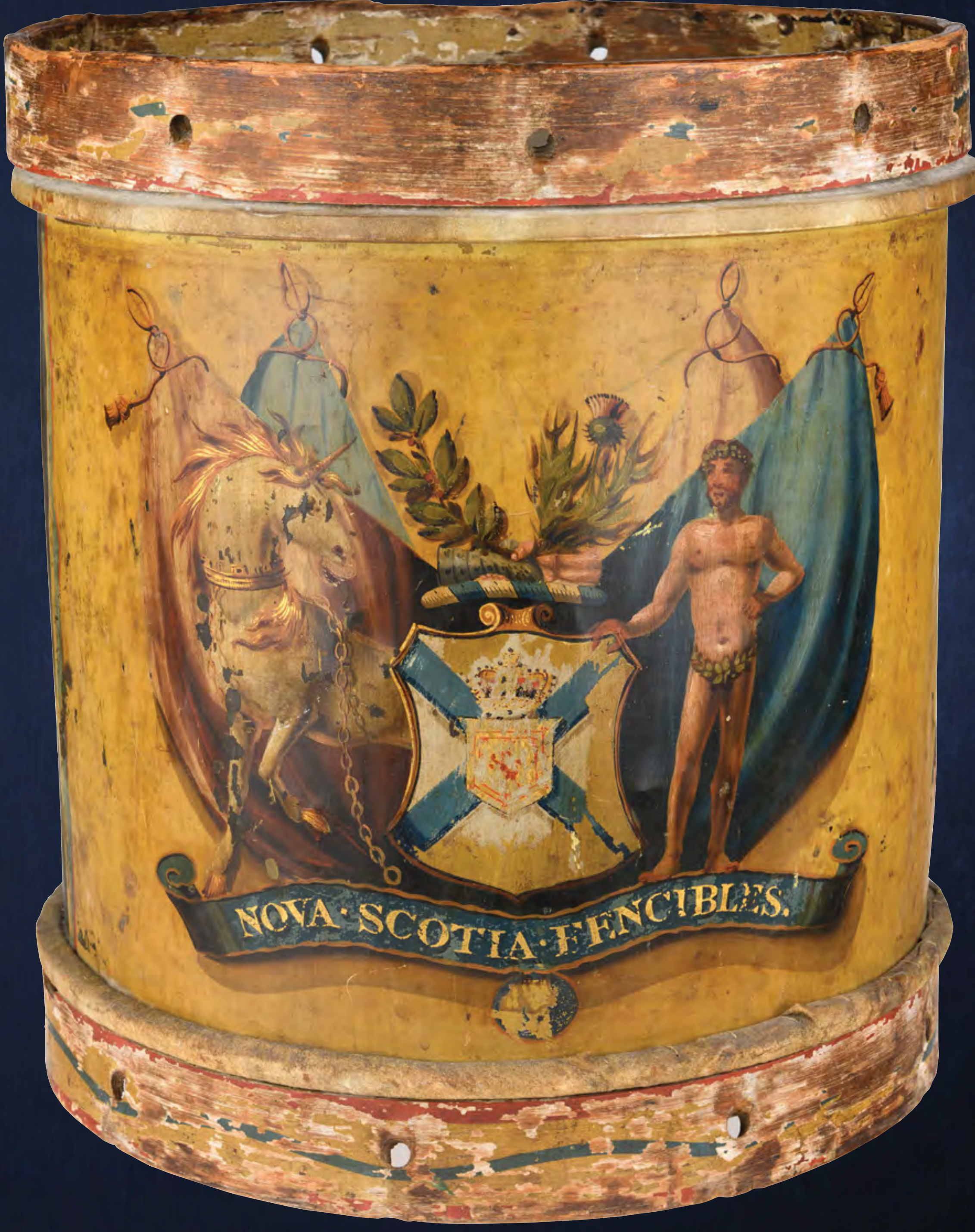
THE LAST SPIKE

In 1885, the Governor General of Canada, Lord Lansdowne, intended to present this silver "last spike" at ceremonies marking the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Unfortunately, he was unable to attend, and, on November 7, 1885, an ordinary iron spike was hammered home at Craigellachie, British Columbia. Six months later, Lansdowne sent this ceremonial silver spike, mounted as a paperweight, to William Van Horne, the general manager of the CPR.
– Courtesy Canadian Museum of History

MANITOBA MUSEUM. CANADIAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY, 2009.0063.0158-DM

"THE LAST SPIKE"
C.P.R.

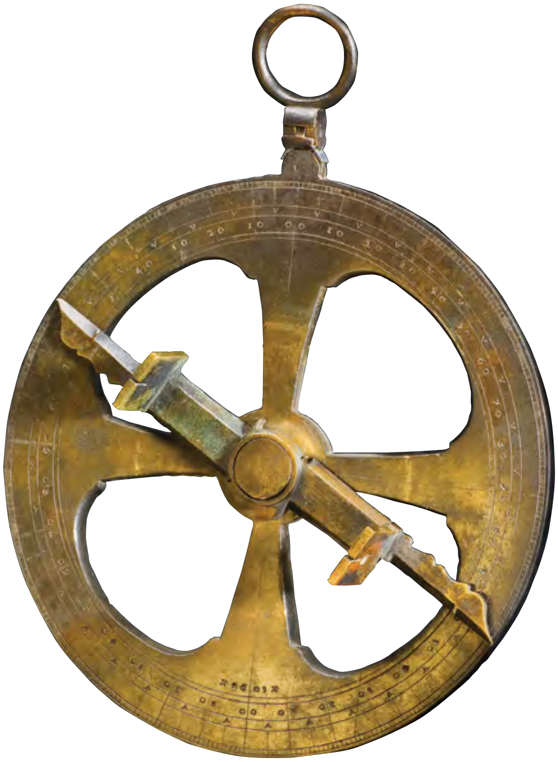
CANADIAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY, 2012-0232-0001-DM


NOVA·SCOTIA·FENCIBLES.

NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM

NOVA SCOTIA FENCIBLES DRUM

A rare example of a turn-of-the-nineteenth-century musical instrument, this drum is one of only two known to exist from the Nova Scotia Fencibles regiment. It is also one of the earliest surviving depictions of the Nova Scotia coat of arms — a cultural symbol of emerging Nova Scotian (as opposed to British imperial or Canadian) identity in the globalized nineteenth-century world. It also marks the importance of settling discharged soldiers in Nova Scotia following the War of 1812. – Courtesy Nova Scotia Museum

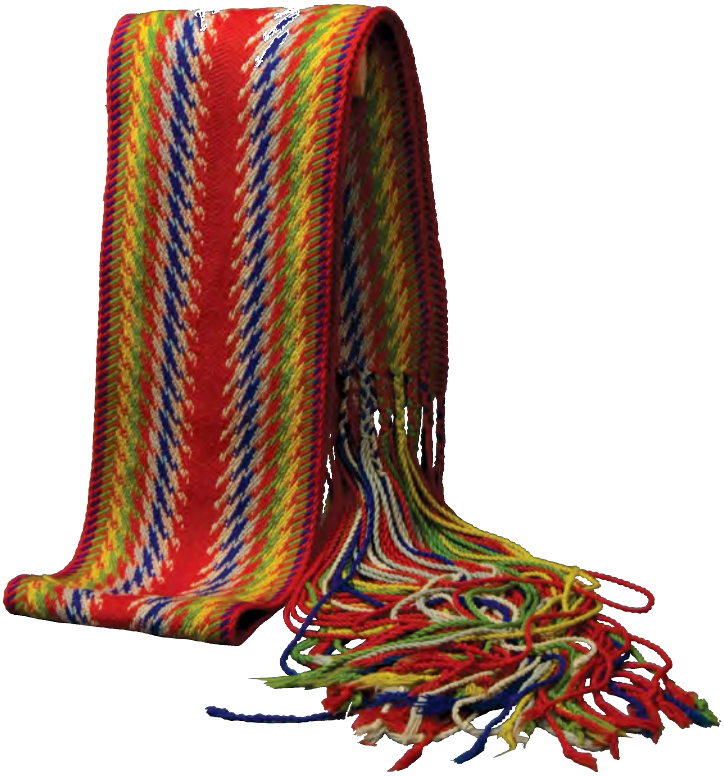


CHAMPLAIN'S ASTROLABE

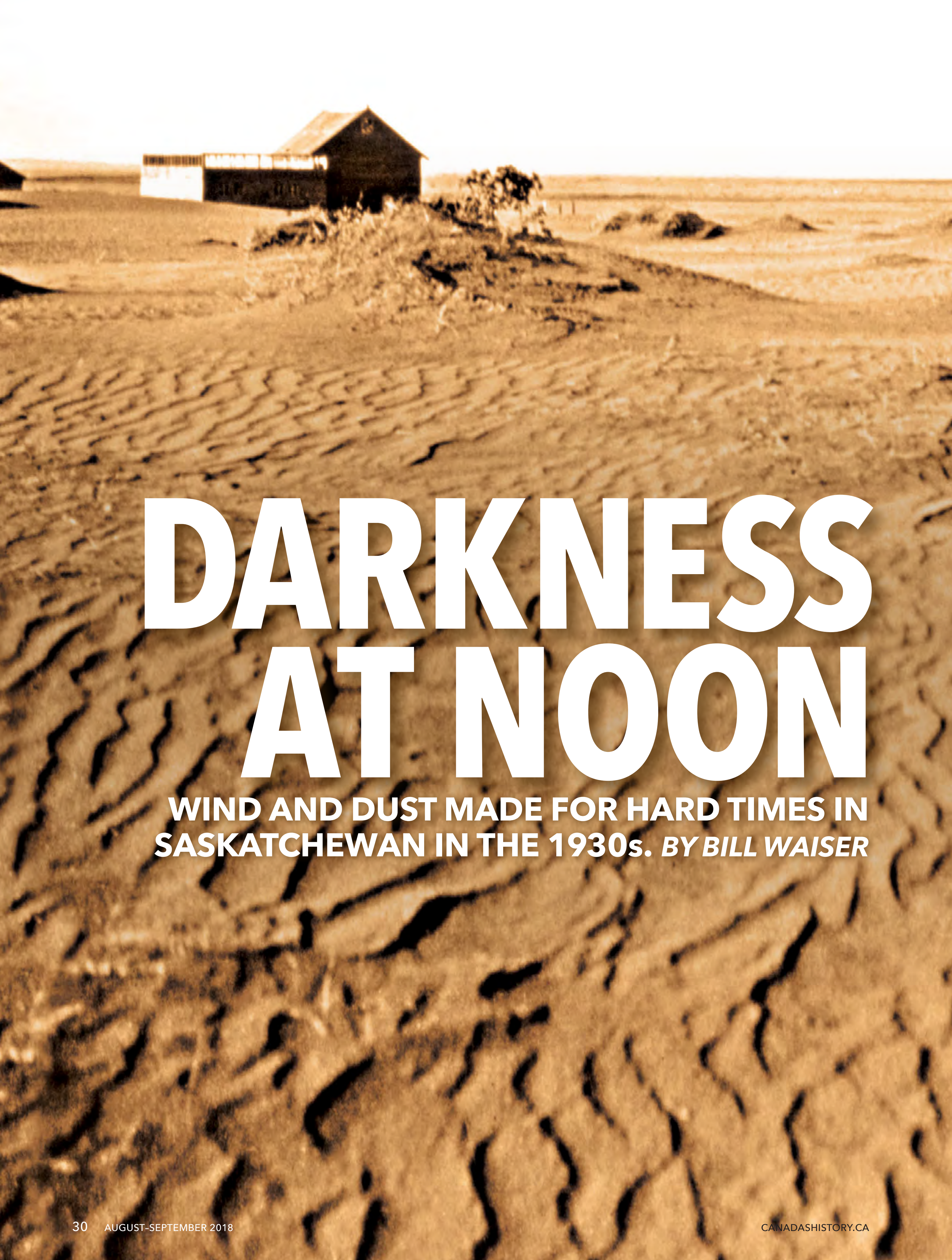
Astrolabes, used to calculate latitude based on the height of the noonday sun, were crucial for explorers and map-makers. This astrolabe made in France in 1603 was found near Cobden, Ontario, in 1867, along a portage route used by Samuel de Champlain on his first trip up the Ottawa River in 1613. It remains a symbol of Champlain's indefatigable drive to create a new colony at Quebec. – Courtesy Canadian Museum of History

LOUIS RIEL'S SASH

After the 1885 defeat of the Northwest Resistance at Batoche in present-day Saskatchewan, Métis leader Louis Riel found refuge in the home of Margaret Halcro. She hid him in the cellar of her house in the Red Deer Hills, near the South Saskatchewan River. Before surrendering to the authorities, Riel gave Halcro his sash, known as a *ceinture fléchée*, to thank her for her courageous action. Riel was taken into custody, tried in Regina, and sentenced to death for treason. He was hanged on November 16, 1885. Today, he is considered the father of the province of Manitoba. – Courtesy Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum



CANADIAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY, 2009-0063-00007-DM. LE MUSÉE DE SAINT-BONIFACE MUSEUM.



DARKNESS AT NOON

WIND AND DUST MADE FOR HARD TIMES IN SASKATCHEWAN IN THE 1930s. *BY BILL WAISER*

"More lies have probably been told about the weather of the dirty thirties than about any other subject except sex," quipped James Gray in his 1967 book *Men Against the Desert*. Yet, he continued, "most of the lies could have been true."

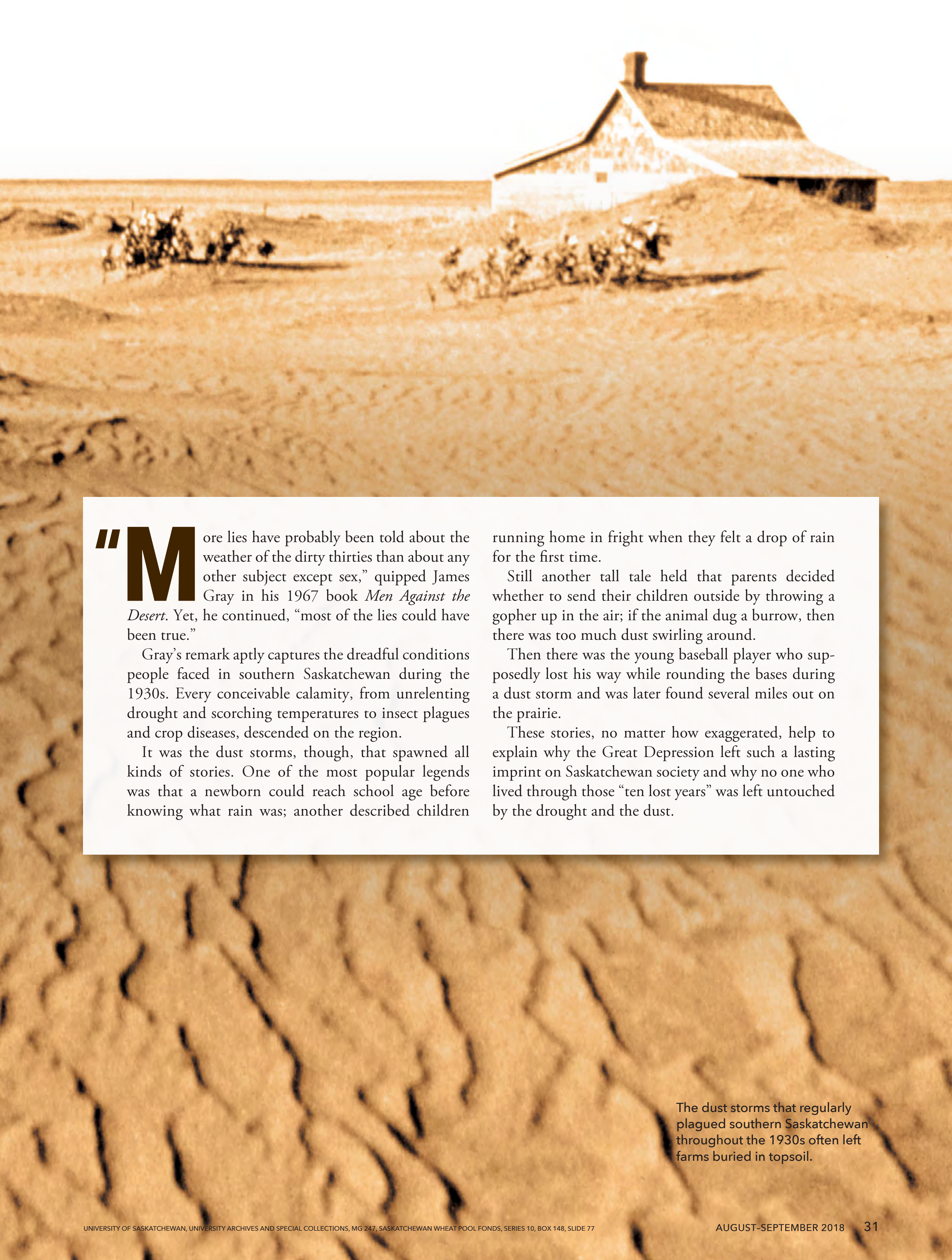
Gray's remark aptly captures the dreadful conditions people faced in southern Saskatchewan during the 1930s. Every conceivable calamity, from unrelenting drought and scorching temperatures to insect plagues and crop diseases, descended on the region.

It was the dust storms, though, that spawned all kinds of stories. One of the most popular legends was that a newborn could reach school age before knowing what rain was; another described children running home in fright when they felt a drop of rain for the first time.

Still another tall tale held that parents decided whether to send their children outside by throwing a gopher up in the air; if the animal dug a burrow, then there was too much dust swirling around.

Then there was the young baseball player who supposedly lost his way while rounding the bases during a dust storm and was later found several miles out on the prairie.

These stories, no matter how exaggerated, help to explain why the Great Depression left such a lasting imprint on Saskatchewan society and why no one who lived through those "ten lost years" was left untouched by the drought and the dust.



The dust storms that regularly plagued southern Saskatchewan throughout the 1930s often left farms buried in topsoil.

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN, UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, MG 247, SASKATCHEWAN WHEAT POOL FONDS, SERIES 10, BOX 148, SLIDE 77

Severe dry spells have always been a feature of prairie life, appearing on average every twenty years or so. In fact, some droughts in the distant past have lasted for decades. In the late-eighteenth century, for example, a series of exceptionally arid years enlarged the area of the Great Sandhills of southwestern Saskatchewan. That was the same period when unusually low water levels made it possible in places to walk across the North Saskatchewan River.

The 1930s were memorable both for the persistence and the extent of the drought. While other provinces, in particular Ontario and Quebec, were recovering from the Great Depression, Saskatchewan experienced its most far-reaching drought in 1937, extending the misery of an unforgiving decade.

It was also a time of extremes. The winter of 1935–36 was one of the coldest on record. It was followed the next summer by one of the longest heat waves in Canadian history, which lasted just shy of two weeks. One year later, on July 5, 1937, the Saskatchewan towns of Midale and Yellow Grass reached forty-five degrees Celsius, the hottest temperature ever recorded in Canada.

MILLIONS OF HECTARES OF LAND HAD EITHER BEEN SUCKED DRY OF ANY MOISTURE OR WERE LITERALLY BLOWING OUT OF CONTROL.

The hot, dry weather devastated the province's agriculture industry. The withering heat stunted the wheat crop, preventing the heads from filling out with grain. Some fields were so patchy that the idea of harvesting them seemed a terrible joke.

Soil erosion was the other serious problem, made worse by the fact that some semi-arid lands should never have been ploughed for grain production in the first place. Millions of hectares of land had either been sucked dry of any moisture or were literally blowing out of control.

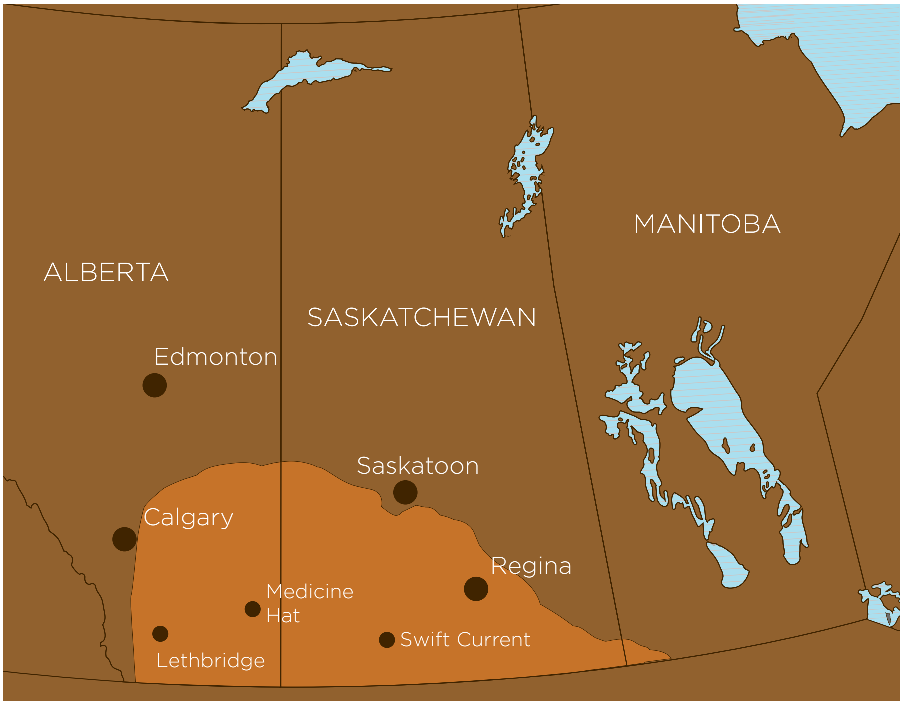
Saskatchewan's total wheat production consequently dropped by one third during the 1930s, even though wheat acreage had increased by more than a million acres. More cropped land was actually producing less wheat. The 1937 wheat harvest was a paltry two and a half bushels per acre. A good year, by comparison, would have yielded about twenty bushels per acre.

Some farmers scrambled to stabilize their land by "listing" — ploughing row upon row of deep furrows, much like waves on the ocean, in hopes of capturing some of the blowing dirt between the furrows. Others simply abandoned fields to Russian thistle in the hope that the weeds would hold down the loose topsoil.

But it would take emergency intervention by the federal government, in the form of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA), to arrest soil drifting and to promote water conservation. Liberal Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, who inherited the temporary program from the R.B. Bennett administration, was not initially keen on the idea.

"It is part of the U.S. desert area," he noted in his diary. "I doubt it will be of any use again." But Jimmy Gardiner, the federal minister of agriculture and a former premier of

Above: Cropped acreage in Saskatchewan actually increased in the early 1930s in the belief that drought would be short-lived. But some fields, like this one near Grey, were so patchy that harvesting was futile.



Right: The Palliser Triangle, shown in light brown, is a drought-prone region first described as unsuitable for agriculture by British Captain John Palliser in 1857.

LEFT: UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN, UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, H.M. AUSTENSON FONDS, MG 180
RIGHT: MAP ILLUSTRATED BY MATT YATHON

BON-TON STORE
BOOTS AND SHOES
CITY DAIRY

A dust storm in Lethbridge, Alberta, circa 1939–40.

GLENBOW ARCHIVES

Saskatchewan, embraced the PFRA as the only realistic solution and pushed through an amendment to it in 1937 that empowered Ottawa to take land out of cultivation and to create community pastures.

Two years later, the PFRA was made permanent, a recognition that ongoing management was necessary to ensure the ecological integrity of the region.

It did not take long for the abnormally dry conditions to spawn towering dust storms across southern Saskatchewan. The first struck in January 1931. Shocked residents of Moose Jaw reported that it was impossible to see across the street during the "black" blizzard. The next major storm coincided with spring seeding. It blanketed roads with drifting soil, sometimes even creating impassable dunes.

By the summer of 1934, town fairs had to be cancelled because of the dirt in the air.

The swirling dust was an unfortunate fact of life for much of the decade, an unwelcome visitor that appeared at the worst possible times, such as Moose Jaw's annual spring cleanup day in 1939.

During the storms, mothers were known to put lamps by windows so that children could find their way home from school.

Housekeepers also faced a frustrating battle trying to keep the dust out of their homes, setting wet rags on windowsills and hanging wet sheets over doorways. But still the dust managed to seep through, depositing a thick film on everything. Tables were often set with the cups and bowls upside down, a temporary response that became a lifelong habit for some.

The memory of the drought and the dust-laden winds would haunt people for years to come. "It is a despairing thing," remarked Etha Munro four decades later, "to watch your farm and pasture land die a slow death over a period of several years, each year getting drier and more hopeless than the year before."

Another dust bowl survivor recalled, "The wind had a moaning sound, sometimes a high piercing sound. It made my head ache. The wind blew day and night for, I am sure, five years."

There were widespread health consequences of living with the omnipresent dust. Of the nearly thirty-five thousand students examined as part of a 1931 provincial health survey, about one in five had an unhealthy throat, most probably from the inhalation of dust. It is quite likely that some children developed lifelong health problems.

In September 1934, D.B. MacRae of the *Regina Leader-Post* and R.M. Scott of the *Winnipeg Free Press* drove through the so-called "burnt-out" area of Saskatchewan and filed daily stories along the way. They wanted to see first-hand the impact of the drought on the land and how it had affected daily life. Their fifteen articles were later reprinted in a small booklet, *In the South Country*.

No matter where the reporters went, they were constantly assured by farmers that "the land is still all right. All it needs is rain." But this faith in the land's future was not matched by reality. As they drove through Cadillac, Kincaid, and Gravelbourg in southwestern Saskatchewan, MacRae and Scott wrote that six years of drought had reduced life "to the lowest common denominator."

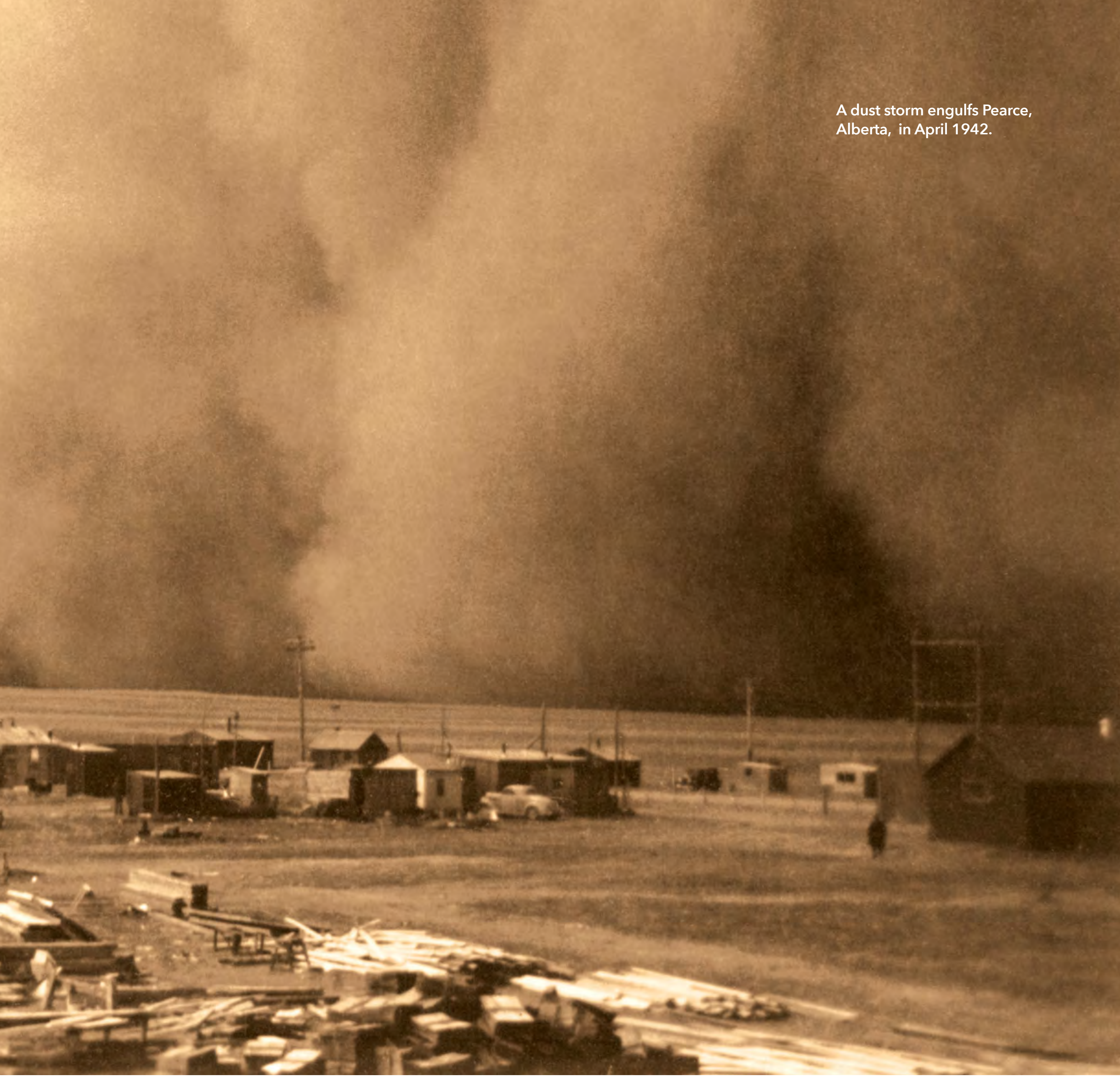
What had once been cultivated fields had been transformed in places to sand dunes. Pasture land had also "been knocked out by soil drifting," leaving farmers with no feed for their cattle.

From Tribune, south of Weyburn, MacRae and Scott reported, "Today many of the stores and shops are vacant, windows nailed up, people gone. There is scarcely a scrap of crop in the country."

The community of Minton was especially hard-hit. "It was a town that was just getting started in 1930," they half-jokingly observed, "and withered before noon." Perhaps the most sweeping assessment of how bad things were was provided by the Chinese cook at the Fillmore restaurant. "No crop," he bluntly asserted. "No garden, no oats, no potatoes, no feed. Nothing of everything."

Thousands of people responded to the harrowing conditions by seeking a new beginning in other parts of the province. As early as 1930, the news of normal rainfall in districts north of the North Saskatchewan River encouraged farmers to abandon their land in favour of starting over again in areas where there was at least the chance of growing a decent crop. This trickle of migrants became a flood once it became apparent that the drought had a stranglehold on southern Saskatchewan.

But leaving was never easy. Mrs. A.W. Bailey, who traded the family farm south of Regina for a new home in the Bjorkdale



A dust storm engulfs Pearce, Alberta, in April 1942.

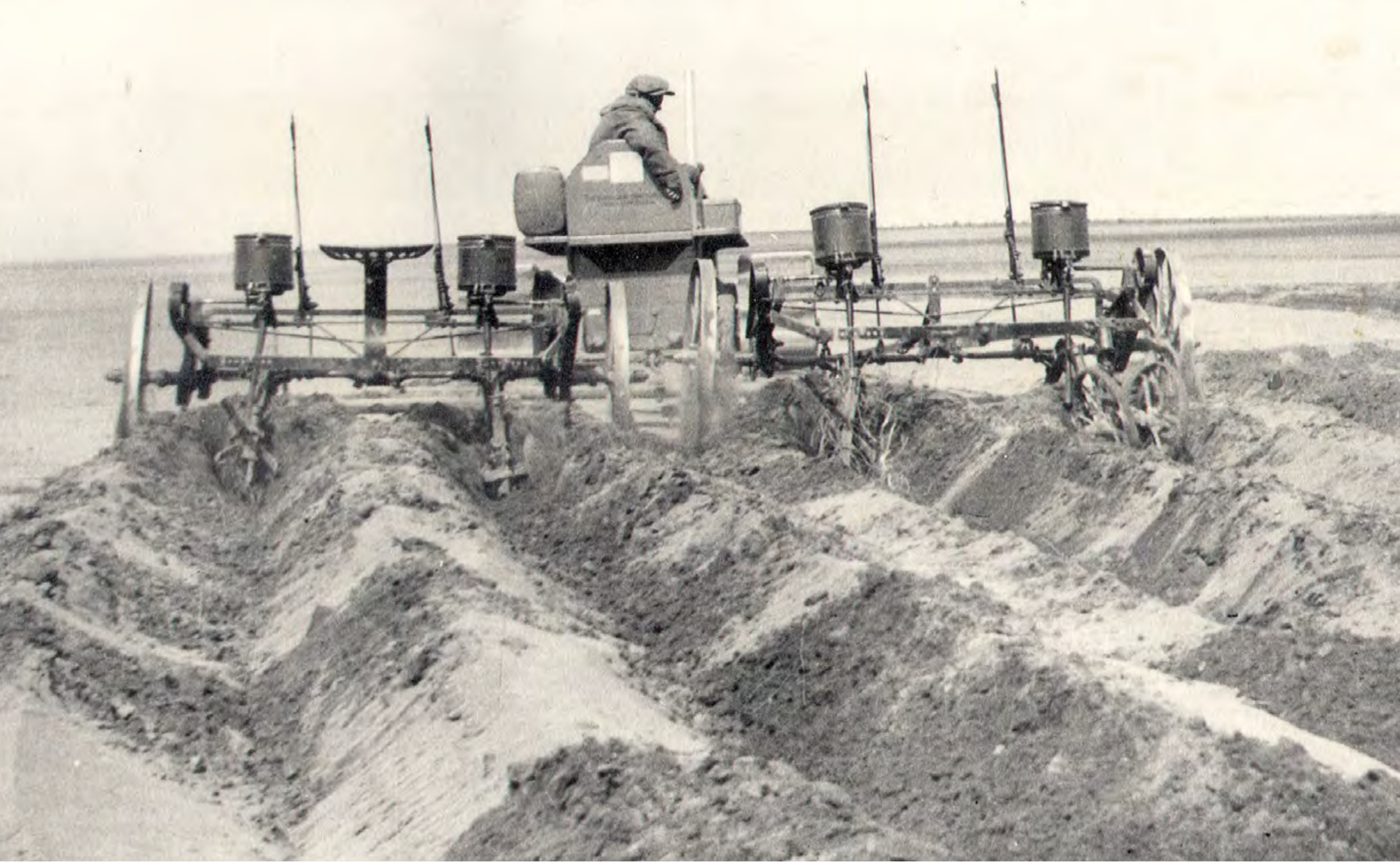
GLENBOW ARCHIVES

district, recalled asking her husband to stop the truck before her former house passed out of sight. “In those few moments,” she later wrote in an article, “I got a lasting mental picture of the little home where my first babies were born. The house that had sheltered us from the snow and wind and dust storms would stand lonely and silent now, with the mice playing in the rooms and the frost cracking the flowered wallpaper .... I closed my eyes and said a silent little prayer.”

The drought-weary farm families headed north with their worldly possessions in all kinds of conveyances, from heavily loaded trucks and horse-drawn Bennett buggies (cars with the motors removed) pulling small trailers, converted hay racks, or specially built cabooses, often trailing a few cows behind. At night, there would be a string of campfires along the highways heading north, as families prepared meals and talked about their new homes and the future.

MacRae and Scott wondered if these dispossessed people would ever come back. Would the abandoned farms ever be occupied again?

Those who remained in southern Saskatchewan carried on as best they could. “It wasn’t this way before,” acknowledged Edna Jaques in a soul-baring article she wrote for *Chatelaine* magazine in November 1937. But, after nine consecutive



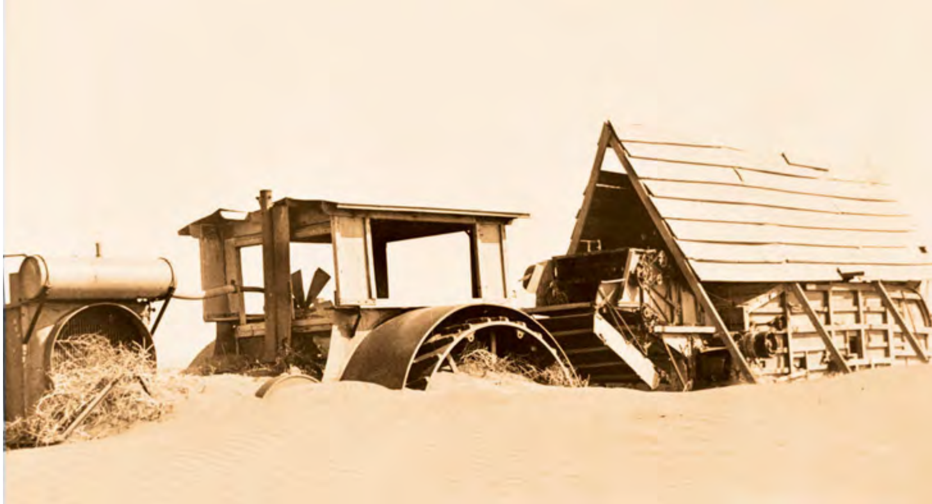
Above: A farmer plows deep furrows in his field (a technique known as listing) to try to capture blowing dirt near Cadillac, Saskatchewan, in April 1933.

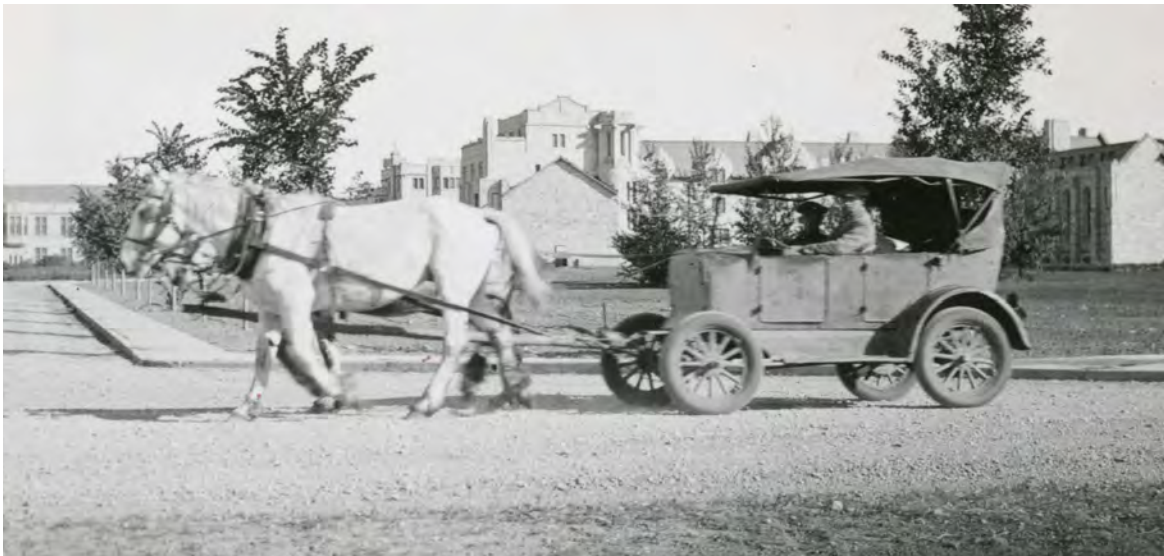
Centre right: A threshing machine during the Depression years in southern Saskatchewan.

Below left: A woman braves a dust storm near Rosetown, Saskatchewan.

Below right: An example of the Bennett buggy, a car with its engine removed, as named after Prime Minister R.B. Bennett.

Opposite page: A demonstration by unemployed people in Edmonton, Alberta, in December 1932.





years of unrelenting drought, the poet from Briercrest found herself “whipped” and “not ashamed any more” to admit it. Her words encapsulated what so many had experienced but had not expressed publicly, capturing the viciousness of the dust and its effects.

Jaques, who was eleven when her family homesteaded in the Moose Jaw area in 1902, had never known the land to be so desolate. Drought had reduced Briercrest to “gray ashy wastes that once were fields, white alkali flats that once were blue simmering lakes.” She scanned the heavens daily in search of the promise of rain, but it never came — only a few scattered drops.

“Today the sky was almost a black blue,” she wrote in frustration. “You would think a million tons of water would be held in its inky depths, but it was only dust and wind.”

That was Jaques’s other lament: “Drought never comes alone.” Hot, drying winds scooped up loose topsoil and unleashed dust blizzards. “The air was murky and thick … that made it hard to breathe,” Jaques recalled after one such storm struck the community. “Your heart pounded against your ribs in a sickening thud.”

Darkness at noon was not uncommon, she wrote. The churning dirt piled up in drifts along buildings, fence lines, or ridges. The “driven soil” was a temporary visitor, Jaques observed, “nesting for a few days until another wind comes up to move it somewhere else.”

She saw clear evidence of the ever-present dust on people’s health. At one town meeting she attended, half the women were suffering from “dust fever.”

“Their faces were swollen and red and broken out,” she reported, “but they’d blow their noses in unison, in duets and trios and choruses and laugh about it.” They all knew, though, that their brave front was a public mask — a way of consoling each other and finding comfort in the belief that next year would be better.

Behind closed doors, it was a different story. “They cry at home,” Jaques commiserated, “cry over shabby children and poor food and dead gardens.”

Children continued to play on the street, seemingly oblivious to how Briercrest had been staggered by depression and drought. But, as Jaques noted, the children, especially the younger ones, had known nothing else.

The dust bowl was never forgotten. “We’ll pull through,” Jaques bravely affirmed. “But we’ll never be the same again — the price of it had been too high.”

Her poetry bore the imprint of what she lived through. Edna Jaques published more than three thousand poems during her lifetime, many noted for their unvarnished realism. Indeed, her verse found a receptive audience in newspapers and magazines in the 1930s and 1940s.

“The Farmer’s Wife in the Drought Area” was one of her more popular Depression poems: “The garden is a dreary blighted waste/ The air is gritty to my taste.” The lines may not have been elegant, but that was Jaques’s appeal. There was nothing elegant about a Saskatchewan dust storm.

AUTO GLASS
PAINTS VARNISHES
STOP!
DEPORTATION OF YOUNG WORKERS

THE LEGACY OF DUST

It is almost impossible to imagine the catastrophic impact of the dust bowl on the lives of the Canadians caught up in it. Years of natural disasters, particularly unprecedented drought, and historically low wheat prices pushed two thirds of Saskatchewan residents onto government relief. Clearly, traditional church and community charity was not enough to assuage the misery of so many destitute families.

Even as the Great Depression widened and deepened, governments were reluctant to help, given that many national programs we now take for granted – such as crop insurance, social welfare, medicare, unemployment insurance, and job-creation initiatives – not only didn’t exist at the time but were seen as little better than communism. What public aid there was often came with a large serving of humiliation.

Out of the misery of so many – at one point one third of the population was out of work – came acceptance that there must be a better way. The 1930s saw the birth of political movements such as the social democratic Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and the Social Credit Party in the West, as well as the Union Nationale in Quebec.

Ordinary Canadians and their governments came to see that government intervention was essential to pulling the country out of its long nightmare. In 1930, the government of R.B. Bennett started to give money to the provinces to provide relief to the unemployed. Economic agencies such as the Bank of Canada and the Canadian Wheat Board were created in the 1930s, and through the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration the federal government promoted techniques to help farmers conserve soil and water. A national unemployment insurance program arrived in 1940, with social assistance, old-age-security measures, medical insurance, and more in the decades following the Second World War.

If even a hint of good can be said to have come from so many people’s devastated lives, health, and sense of self-worth, it can be found in the reality that out of their pain emerged help for millions who came after them. – *Nancy Payne*

LEFT PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN, UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, H.M. AUSTENSON FONDS, MG 180. GLENBOW ARCHIVES, UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN, UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, MG 247, SASKATCHEWAN WHEAT POOL FONDS, SERIES 10, BOX 148, SLIDE 77, ROSETOWN CENTENNIAL LIBRARY ARCHIVES; RIGHT PAGE: GLENBOW ARCHIVES

THE COUNTRY OF HALF WELCOMES

CANADA'S CHECKERED HISTORY WITH REFUGEES.

BY GEORGE MELNYK

In the summer of 2017 Canadians saw a daily stream of asylum seekers walking across the Canada-U.S. border into Quebec. As Canadians saw images of families dragging suitcases into a temporary shelter set up in Montreal's Olympic Stadium, perhaps they wondered if the country was facing a wave of refugees similar to the one Europe had experienced in 2015–16. What Canadians may not have realized was that this sudden swell of displaced humanity in search of a haven is typical of a long historical pattern in which periods of relative calm and orderly migration are disrupted by waves of refugees and other migrants. These surges often appear without warning and then subside as quickly as they appeared.

The United Nations Convention on Refugees defines refugees as people with a well-founded fear of persecution, whether because of race, religion, political opinion, nationality, or membership in a particular social group. They are typically outside their home country and unable or unwilling to return to it.

The signatories to the convention, which include Canada, have agreed not to forcibly return refugees or legitimate refugee claimants and to treat them in a manner similar to their own nationals. In Canada's case that means the provision of health care, education, legal aid, and work permits for employment.

At different times Canada has provided asylum or created refugees. On the displacement side is the expulsion of Acadians in the mid-1700s and the fate of the Sioux, led by the legendary Chief Sitting Bull, who came to Canada in 1877 after their victory over American troops at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Starving, and with their request for a land reserve rejected by the federal government, they returned to the United States. On the receptive side are the stories of the Scottish highlanders, driven out by the agricultural clearances that began in the mid-eighteenth century and continued until the mid-nineteenth century, and of the victims of the Irish potato famine of 1845 to 1849.

Our country has had a long and complicated history when it comes to refugees, at times welcoming and at others unwelcoming — or, as the advocacy group Citizens for Public Justice put it, providing a "half welcome."

Canada's first large-scale influx of refugees occurred after the American Revolution ended in 1783. Some forty-five thousand United Empire Loyalists, formerly British subjects coming from the newly united republic, fled north to the remaining British North American colonies. Their number included some three thousand black Loyalists who had gained their freedom from slavery by joining the British side. Lawrence Hill's award-winning novel *The Book of Negroes*, which became a literary sensation when it appeared in 2007, referred to a ledger of the same name used by the British to evacuate 2,744 former slaves in 1783.

African Americans, both free people and those who had been enslaved, continued to flee to Canada in smaller numbers throughout the early nineteenth century. Their ranks increased dramatically when the United States passed a law in 1850 that allowed for the recapture of escaped slaves who had made it to free states. About thirty thousand former slaves fled to Canada, many of them using the so-called Underground Railroad, a secret network of abolitionists and formerly enslaved people who assisted them on their journey north.

Although many found refuge in Canada, they also had to deal with widespread racism and discrimination. The movement produced a popular literary genre that came to be called slave narratives. Among them was a collection of first-person accounts published in 1856 under the title *A North-Side View of Slavery: The Refugee or the Narratives of Fugitive Slaves in Canada*. One of those narratives was by J.C. Brown. He described coming to Canada in the early 1800s from Ohio, which had just passed a law demanding that a bond be posted by employed African Americans:

"I spoke to them of Canada and we formed a Colonization Society of which I was the President. I wrote for the Board to Sir John Colborne, at Little York, now Toronto, to know if we could find in Canada an asylum for ourselves, our wives, and children. Two members of the Board went with the letter to Toronto, and were well received by Sir John. He wrote us to remove ourselves into Canada with our wives and children, if we chose to do so;

Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Chinese labourers work on the Canadian Pacific Railway in the mountains of British Columbia in 1884. A family arrives from Hungary in December 1956. A man talks to passengers from India who were not allowed to leave their ship, the *Komagata Maru*, to enter Vancouver in July 1914. An 1835 painting, *Bedford Basin*, by Robert Petley, depicts black Loyalists in the Halifax area pulling a cart. Russian Doukhobor settlers on a ship to Canada, 1898. Refugee Nguyen Thi Yen holds her sick child as she and forty-eight other refugees arrive at Khlong Yai in Thailand in 1977 after making the perilous voyage from Vietnam in a fishing boat.

ABOVE LEFT: LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA, ABOVE RIGHT: CITY OF VANCOUVER ARCHIVES,
CENTRE RIGHT: CITY OF VANCOUVER ARCHIVES, BELOW RIGHT: LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA,
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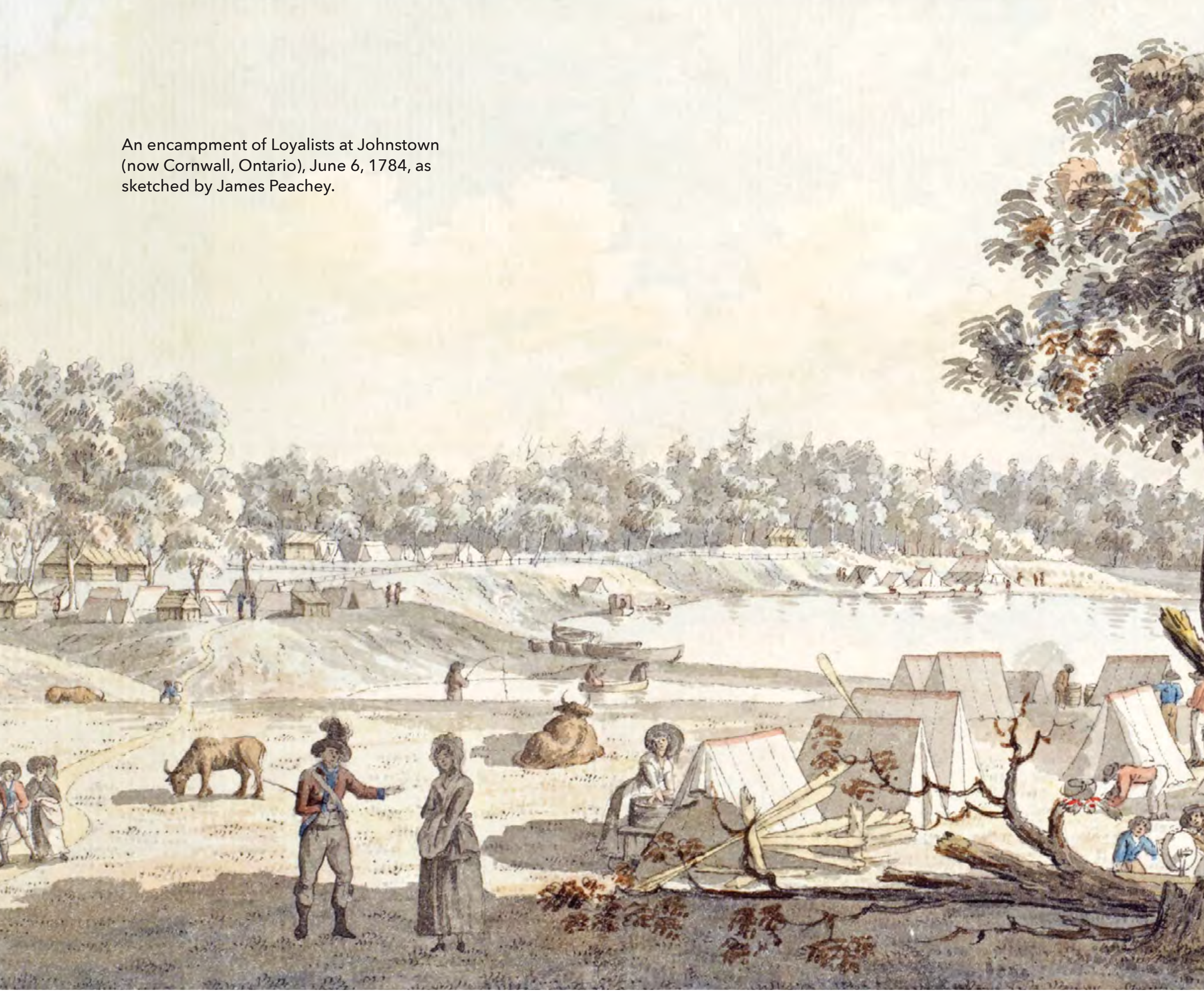
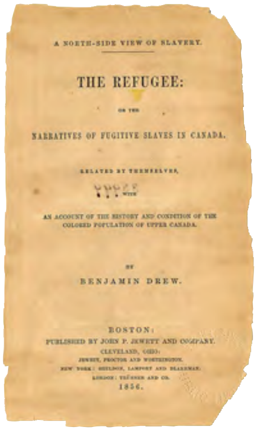


An encampment of Loyalists at Johnstown (now Cornwall, Ontario), June 6, 1784, as sketched by James Peachey.

and that so long as we remained true and loyal subjects, we should have every privilege extended to us that was enjoyed by any of her majesty's subjects without distinction being made on account of color."

Smaller groups of refugees entered Canada in the later 1800s, including Jews fleeing pogroms in the Russian empire. The Doukhobors, who also came from Russia, were a religious minority whose members had been persecuted and then forced into military service against their pacifist beliefs. Leo Tolstoy, the famous novelist, petitioned for and then mobilized support for their emigration. With the financial help of his fellow countrymen (Tolstoy donated the royalties from his book *Resurrection*) and the intervention of Quakers in Britain and North America, some seven and a half thousand Doukhobors settled in Saskatchewan in 1899.



A NORTH-SIDE VIEW OF SLAVERY.

THE REFUGEE:

OR THE

NARRATIVES OF FUGITIVE SLAVES IN CANADA.

RELATED BY THEMSELVES,

WITH

AN ACCOUNT OF THE HISTORY AND CONDITION OF THE
COLORED POPULATION OF UPPER CANADA.

BY

BENJAMIN DREW.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY JOHN P. JEWETT AND COMPANY.
CLEVELAND, OHIO:
JEWETT, PROCTOR AND WORTHINGTON.
NEW YORK: SHELDON, LAMPORT AND BLAKEMAN.
LONDON: TRÜBNER AND CO.
1856.

The title page of *A North-Side View of Slavery*, from 1856.

Canada was at its least welcoming to refugees after the passage of the *Immigration Act* of 1910, which enshrined racist criteria that targeted groups such as Asians and African Americans who wanted to participate in the settlement of Western Canada at the turn of the twentieth century.

The infamous *Chinese Immigration Act* of 1923 barred all Chinese people except those who had a minimum of $2,500 to invest in a business. It continued the entrenched racism of an earlier era, when, after the 1885 completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, each Chinese person had to pay a head tax of fifty dollars to enter Canada; the figure had risen to five hundred dollars by the 1920s.

In stark contrast, Canadian officials in the 1920s were more than willing to accept white European Mennonites fleeing communism in Russia. In total about twenty thousand Mennonites were

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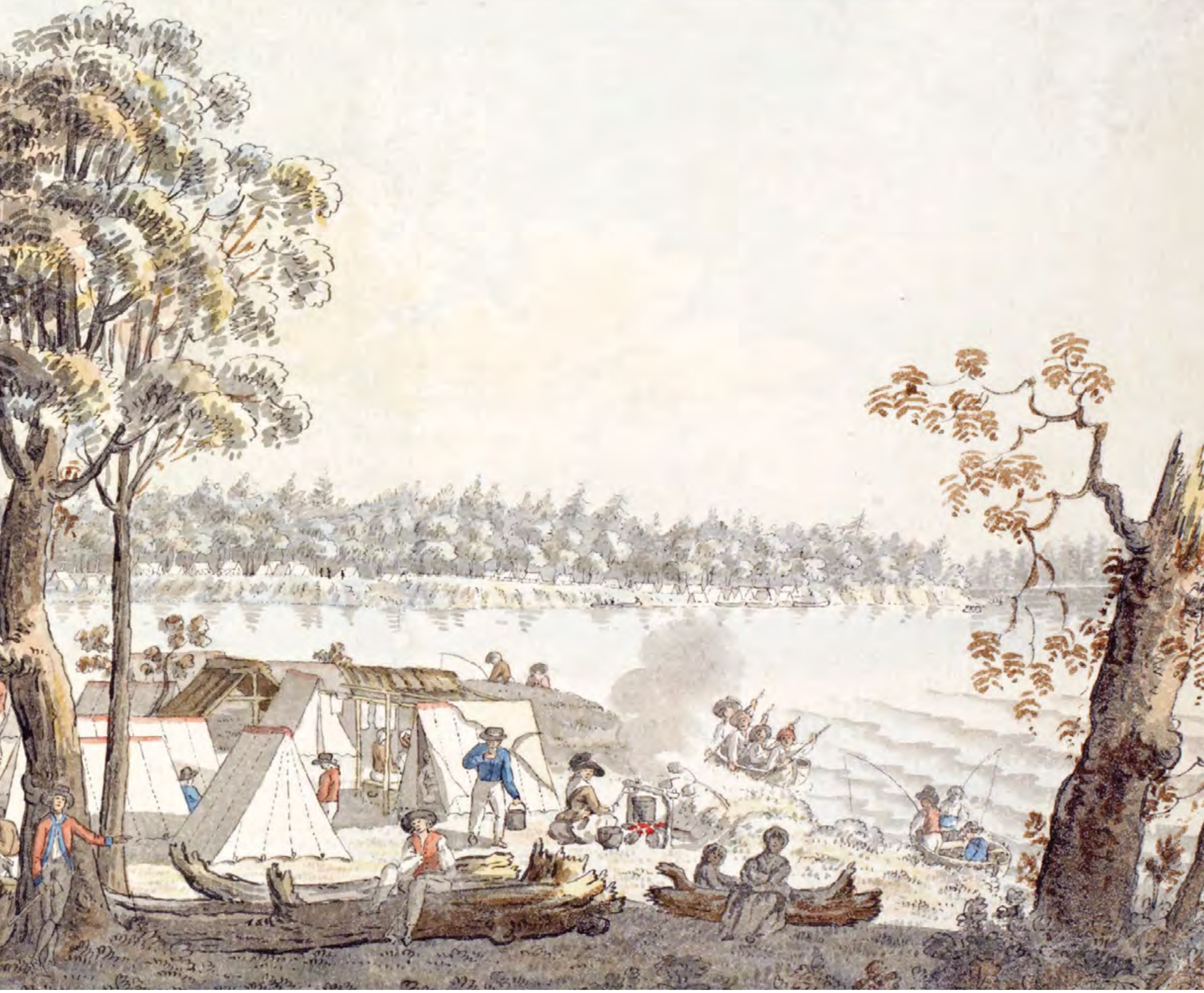
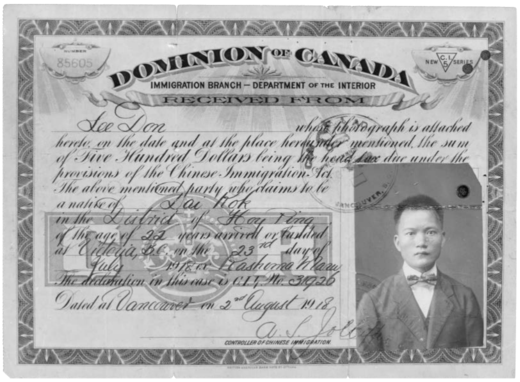


admitted to Canada by 1927 thanks to the efforts of the Mennonite Central Committee, which had to persuade the federal government that Mennonites were not communists.

During the Depression of the 1930s immigration plummeted, as did the number of asylum seekers coming to Canada. At that time Canada did not make a distinction between a regular immigrant and a refugee, which proved especially tragic as the rise of fascism and Nazism in Europe generated a new wave of refugees. In 1939 the SS *St. Louis*, carrying more than nine hundred Jewish refugees from Germany, was turned away first by Cuba, then by the United States, and finally by Canada. The ship returned to Europe to face the Nazi terror, and hundreds of its passengers died. In May 2018, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that he would officially apologize in the House of Commons for Canada's rejection of the asylum seekers on the *St. Louis*.



NUMBER 85605

DOMINION OF CANADA

NEW C.I. 5 SERIES

IMMIGRATION BRANCH — DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

RECEIVED FROM

Lee Don whose photograph is attached hereto, on the date and at the place hereunder mentioned, the sum of Five Hundred Dollars being the head tax due under the provisions of the Chinese Immigration Act. The above mentioned party who claims to be a native of Lai Kok in the District of Hoy Ping of the age of 22 years arrived or landed at Victoria, B.C. on the 23rd day of July 1918 ex Kashima Maru The declaration in this case is C.I.4. No. 31926

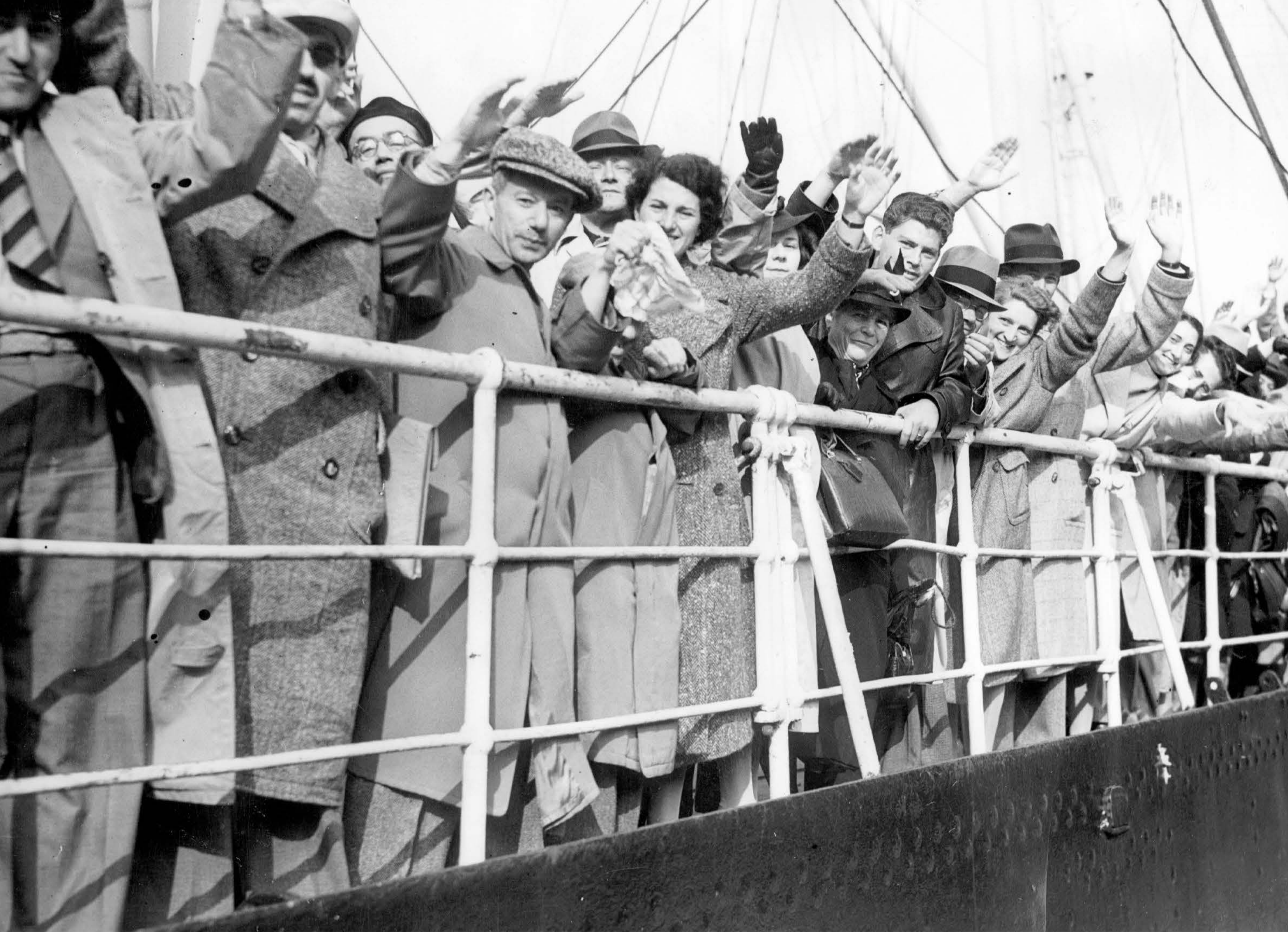
Dated at Vancouver on 2nd August 1918

A. L. Jolliffe
CONTROLLER OF CHINESE IMMIGRATION

A certificate issued under the *Chinese Immigration Act*.

VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

One of the organizations that sought to change the mind of the Canadian government was the Canadian National Committee on Refugees (CNCR), formed in 1938. Chaired by Cairine Wilson, Canada's first female senator, the organization lobbied vocally on behalf of asylum seekers. The CNCR focused on some 2,500 "enemy aliens" who had first been interned in Great Britain because of their German or Austrian nationality and then were shipped to Canada to live in camps. Many



Jewish refugees aboard the SS *St. Louis* in 1939. After being turned away by Canada and other countries, the ship returned to Germany, where about a quarter of its passengers died in Nazi death camps.

were Jews who had fled to Britain after Hitler came to power, but their citizenship rendered them suspect. Those who remained in Canada after the war — some had gone back to Britain or to the United States — were reclassified as "internal refugees" (friendly aliens) from the United Kingdom and allowed to stay. Roughly one thousand of them, mostly young people, opted to become Canadians.

The post-Second World War period brought the term "displaced person" — often shortened to the pejorative DP — into Canadians' lexicon. The term referred to the vast numbers of refugees generated by the war, including the seven million people who had been used for forced labour or who had been prisoners in Germany at the end of the war. Many were repatriated, but many others refused to be sent back to their former homes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union because they feared persecution and did not want to live under communism. They were people without a state, a home, or possessions.

For the first few years after the war, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration looked after the camps in which these former prisoners lived. The newly created United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) took over in 1950. Among the first of these refugees to make it to Canada was a group of four thousand veterans of the Polish Free Army who had fought with the Allies. They were admitted to Canada as farm labourers and were indentured to spend two years in agricultural work before being free to choose their own futures. In total, about 165,000 displaced people immigrated to Canada between 1947 and 1952, most of whom were bona fide refugees.

In the fall of 1956 Hungarians rose up against their country's communist regime, but the revolt was crushed within two weeks by the Soviet Union. Two hundred thousand Hungarians fled to Austria; thirty-seven thousand of them came to Canada. The Canadian government, which remained staunchly anti-communist during the Cold War years, was eager to help and even chartered planes to bring them to Canada. The use of air transport was a new development that became essential to refugee resettlement policy in the future.

Clearly, when a refugee crisis developed, Canada was capable of taking in a large number of those in need; but ordinarily the numbers were much smaller. For example, during World Refugee Year in 1959–60 — a UN-supported international initiative to alleviate a global refugee crisis — Canada took in only seven thousand refugees.

BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

While not technically refugees according to the UN definition, the young American men who fled to Canada between 1965 and 1975 during the Vietnam War were seeking refuge from serving in what they considered an unjust war. It is difficult to determine their numbers because these conscientious objectors — or draft dodgers, as they were often known — gained entry as regular immigrants.

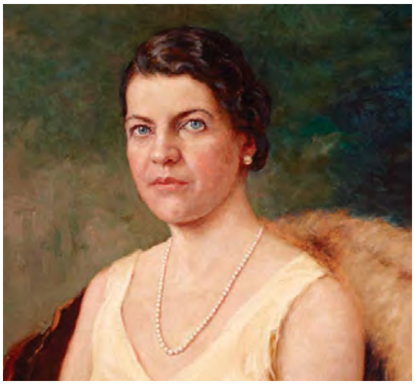
At the time Canada had a point system for assessing immigrant admissibility. If a war resister showed up at a border crossing carrying proof of education, such as a university degree, or, better still, a teaching certificate, he would probably have enough points to be admitted immediately as a landed immigrant (now called a permanent resident). If someone did not have the right credentials, the only option was to sneak across the border and go underground.

Ismaili Muslims of South Asian origin living in east Africa definitely fit the definition of refugees. In 1971, Idi Amin seized power in Uganda in a military coup. The next year all South Asians in the country, whatever their citizenship or the passports they may have held, were given a short time to leave. They were exiled because of their race, their religion, and their economic status. Amin saw their entrepreneurial record and their higher economic status as a threat to the advancement of African Ugandans, and he seized the chance to look like a leader by indulging in ethnic cleansing. Canada organized an emergency airlift and admitted 5,700 Ismaili Muslim refugees.

Other than some families from Hong Kong who had been granted entry in 1962, this was the first instance in Canadian history when non-white refugees were admitted en masse. Their arrival signalled the effective removal of longstanding racial discrimination in Canadian immigration and refugee policy.

In September 1973 the elected government of Chile was overthrown by a military coup. Thousands of Chileans were imprisoned, and many died in custody. More than seven thousand Chilean refugees who had supported the previous government entered Canada between 1973 and 1978. Canada's new *Immigration Act* of 1976 specifically mentioned a commitment to refugees under the UN Convention on Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. The new act also mentioned persecuted minorities and displaced persons who did not qualify under UN rules as refugees but who were considered by Canada to be in need of protection for humanitarian reasons. It created a category known as a "group of five" that allowed small groups of private citizens to sponsor refugees. It was the most progressive legislation on refugees Canada had seen, and it set the context for the dramatic happenings of 1979–80.

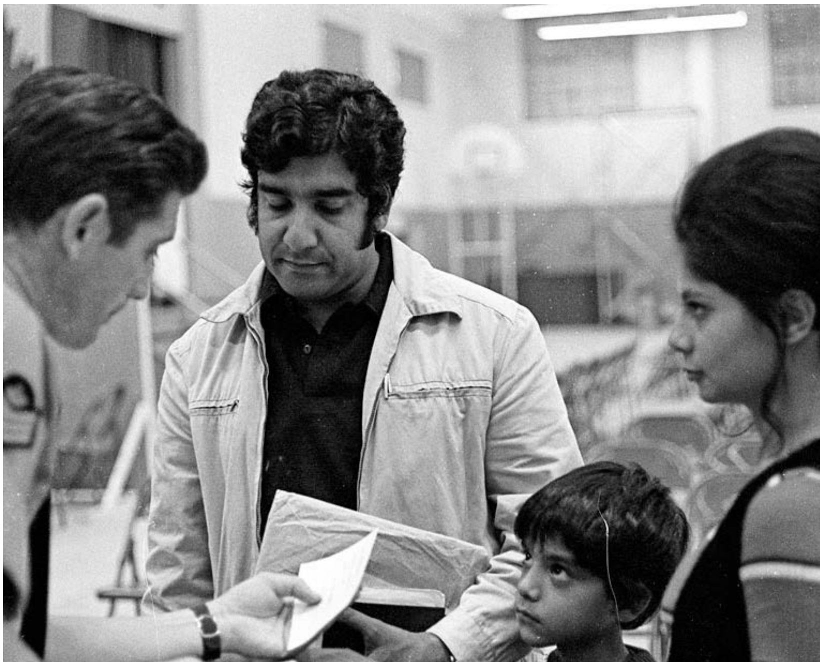
Kolping - Tes



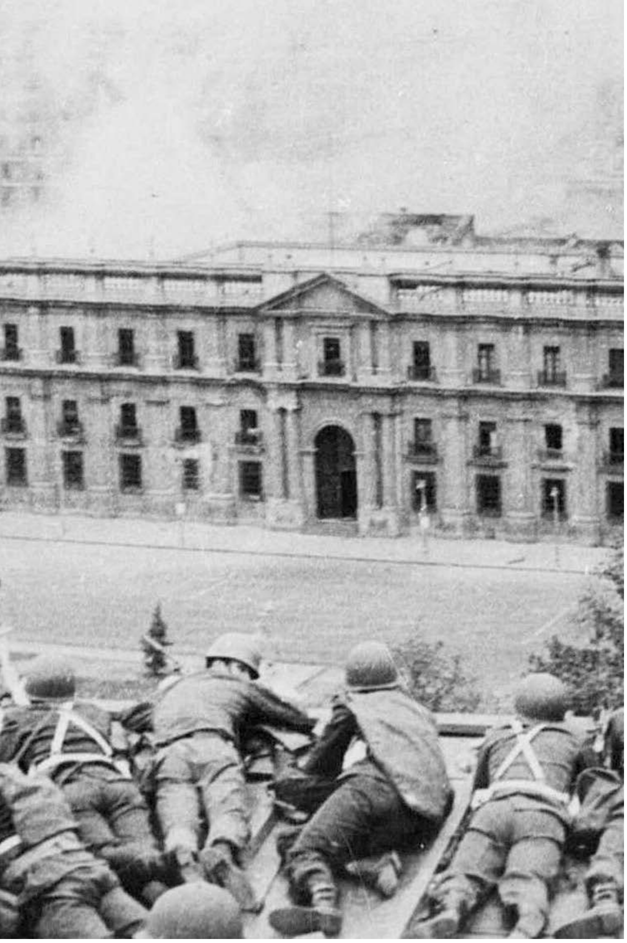
Far left: A man who has just arrived from Hungary in 1956 holds a poster.

Left: A portrait of Cairine Wilson, Canada's first female senator and a founder of the Canadian National Council on Refugees, circa 1930.

Below: Refugees from Uganda talk to a government official at CFB Montreal in 1972.



VANCOUVER CITY ARCHIVES, LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA



Left: Soldiers supporting a coup in Chile, led by General Augusto Pinochet, take cover as bombs are dropped on the presidential palace, La Moneda, on September 11, 1973.

Above: Members of the Enriquez family, fleeing Chile in 1974, prepare to board a Canadian Forces plane that will take them to Toronto.

Below: Five members of the American Deserters Committee pose for a photo that originally accompanied "Why They Won't Fight," a story in *Weekend magazine* in May 1969. From left to right: Larry Svirchev, Jim Weeks, Paul Petri, Steve Argo, John Nicols.

WORK for PEACE
HELL NO
WE WO

The Vietnam War, a civil war complicated by American intervention, had been a brutal conflict. It ended in 1975 when the communist north conquered the anti-communist south. Not only did it generate a flow of war resisters to Canada, it also prompted an exodus that began to swell in the late 1970s when tens of thousands of Vietnamese piled into rickety boats and sought asylum outside their war-torn homeland. While many died at sea, more than eight hundred thousand ended up in camps in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Hong Kong. The Canadian government sent officials to the camps, organized an airlift, and eventually admitted sixty thousand boat people, as they were commonly known, to Canada.

For the first time, a nationwide sponsorship agreement was signed, in this case between the federal government and the Mennonite Central Committee. Similar agreements were soon signed with other charitable organizations. These master agreements allowed numerous five-person groups of private sponsors to be vetted, approved, and warranted, not by the government but by an agency that held a master agreement. The agencies agreed to fulfill the commitments made to refugees no matter what happened to the sponsoring group.

The result was that more than half of the Vietnamese people who came to Canada were admitted as privately sponsored refugees. No other country had such a system. A group of five had to deposit sufficient funds to maintain the refugees and their families for a full year and was responsible for facilitating their resettlement in Canada, including schooling for the children, housing, clothing, and groceries. Within two years there were forty-seven of these master agreements in place. This meant that hundreds of small groups of ordinary citizens from across Canada were mobilized to offer assistance under the guidance of larger, credible organizations.

The arrival of the Vietnamese refugees also marked a new era in which most people who fled to Canada were not from European backgrounds. With widespread conflict in Africa and in the Middle East came sharp increases in the number of refugees. At the beginning of the 1960s there were one million refugees in the world; thirty years later there were fifteen million.

In 1985 Canada received the Nansen Medal from the United Nations for its work on behalf of refugees — the only time the award has been given to the entire population of a country. But the very next year Parliament passed Bill C-84, the *Refugee Deterrents and Detention Bill*, to deal with boatloads of refugees appearing on its shores. The unexpected arrival of unprocessed refugee claimants at Canadian borders was a new phenomenon. Concern grew that the newcomers were bypassing normal procedures in which their claims would have been processed abroad. So began the debate over "jumping the queue."

The next year the government created a new immigration act that would deny entry to any refugee claimant who came from a designated "safe country" that had a reliable refugee adjudication process. In many cases, that meant the United States. But, curiously, the legislation contained a major loophole. It only applied to people trying to enter Canada at an official border crossing, where they could be turned back. With thousands of kilometres of undefended and unfenced border

ABOVE RIGHT: CANADIAN PRESS. OPPOSITE PAGE ABOVE LEFT: CANADIAN PRESS.
ABOVE RIGHT: COURTESY MULTICULTURAL HISTORY SOCIETY OF ONTARIO.
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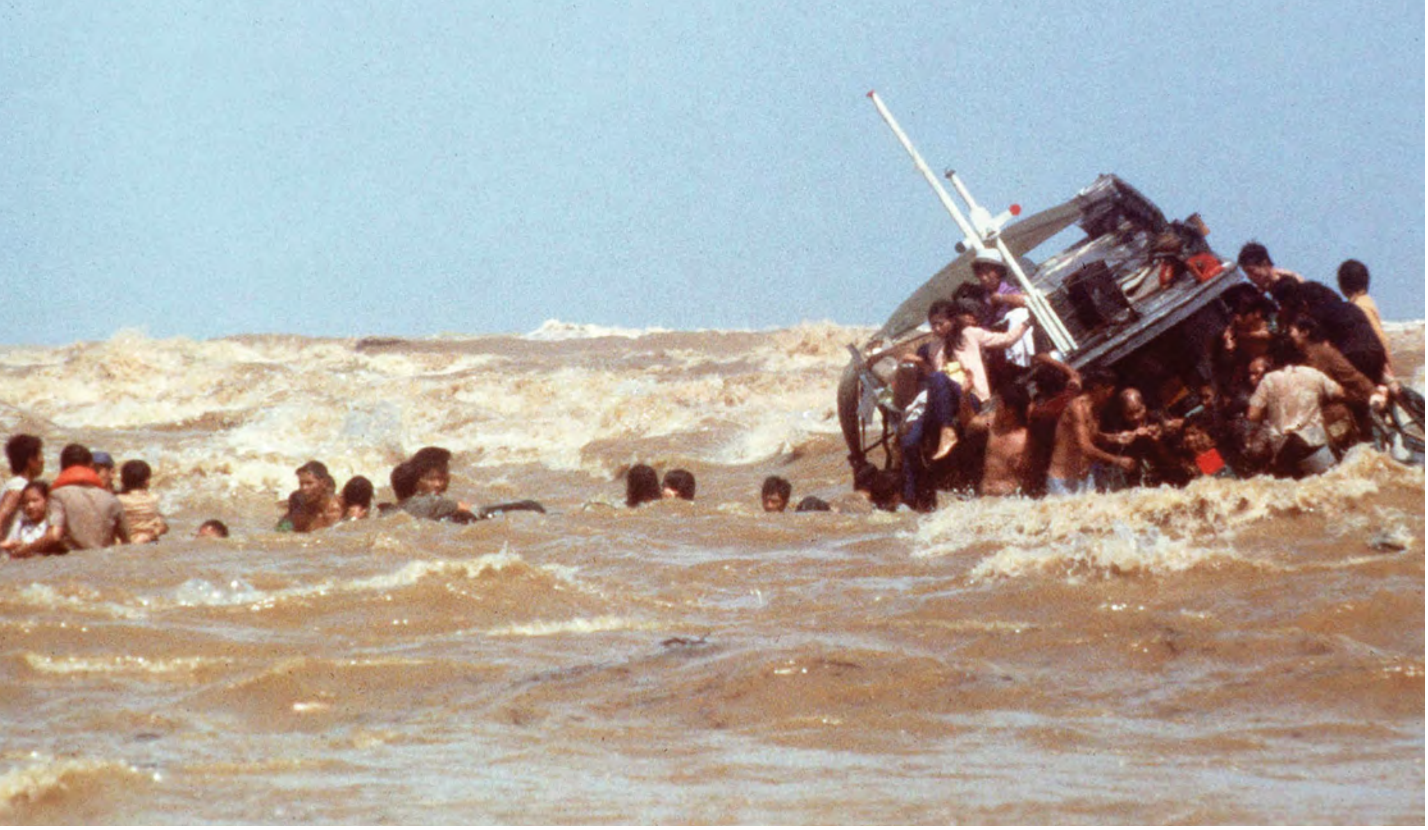
Refugee claimants from Eritrea, bound for Canada, cross the border between New York State and Quebec in March 2017.

Canada and the world's dispossessed

In 2016 Canada admitted 46,700 refugees, the largest yearly number in half a century. Jean-Nicolas Beuze, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) representative in Canada, called it "a tremendous achievement which reflects Canada's long-standing tradition of welcoming refugees."

More than twenty-two million refugees around the world are registered with the United Nations, many of them internally displaced or living in UN-supervised camps. Only about one per cent (220,000) ever get a chance at resettlement. The other ninety-nine per cent languish in the camps for years or are absorbed haphazardly into their host society, often without legal rights. A further forty-five million displaced people are not registered with the UNHCR.

From 2000 to 2016 the number of asylum claimants – those seeking refugee status either at the border or within Canada – has varied from ten thousand to forty-four thousand, with an average of about twenty-seven thousand per year, according to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. The last time Canada took in a similarly large number of refugees was in 1980, when 40,271 Vietnamese boat people – the name came from the rickety, overloaded vessels in which they fled their homeland – arrived. As just one wave of refugees remembered by many living in Canada today, they were certainly neither the first nor the last to arrive.
– George Melnyk



Vietnamese refugees scramble from a sinking boat at Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia, in December 1978.

between the two countries, people could cross anywhere and request a refugee hearing. And they did.

When Haitians living legally in the United States after having fled their country in the wake of the 2010 earthquake began to fear deportation, many decided to cross the border outside official crossing points. Those who chose this route were arrested, quickly processed on-site, and then released as refugee claimants to await a hearing. Of the Haitian cases adjudicated by the end of 2017, only a small percentage was approved. Rejected claimants were subject to deportation.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, the arrival of Sudanese, Bosnians, Kosovars, Afghanis, Bhutanese, Somalis, and Sri Lankans reflected regions with severe conflicts that sent people scrambling for a better life. By 2013 there were 16.5 million refugees worldwide; a year later that number had jumped to 19.5 million; and by early 2018 it surpassed 22 million.

Another Canadian mass humanitarian outreach was extended to Syrian refugees starting in late 2015. The twenty-five thousand who initially came to Canada represented a small portion of the millions of Syrians who had fled to Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon after the outbreak of a murderous civil war that continues to rage. Canada was selective, taking in primarily families and doing this through a large contingent of private sponsors that included groups from churches and unions as well as spontaneously formed teams of co-workers and neighbours. Between November 15, 2015, and January 29, 2017, 40,081 Syrians landed in Canada, including 14,274 who were privately sponsored.

NESTEKJÆRLIGHET ER REALPOLITIKK
FRIDTJOF NANSEN

The UN's Nansen Medal, awarded in 1985 to Canada for its work with refugees.

While Canadians generally pride themselves on welcoming refugees, there are many problematic, even tragic, individual stories. The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, which adjudicates such claims, generally approves sixty to seventy per cent of applications, leaving a large number of people who are denied status and deported.

The lucky ones get to stay, like the two tourists who arrived from Europe on a warm fall day in 2016. Their flight was the first to be received at the Calgary airport's spanking-new international terminal. Upon arrival, the men picked up their luggage and their cat, and then they entered the arrivals area to be greeted by those waiting. Three months later they applied for refugee status.

The two men had been high-profile gay activists in Serbia. They were fired from jobs and expelled from university because of their sexual orientation. They experienced physical assaults and online death threats, and their apartment was ransacked. The men had extensive proof of persecution on the basis of sexual orientation, and they had the support of an ad hoc group in Canada that raised $5,000 to pay for their legal fees.

Today they are busy telling their story to Canadian audiences, especially to LGBTQ youth, improving their English language skills, and waiting for their permanent resident cards to

CANADIAN PRESS, PUBLIC DOMAIN

arrive. While awaiting permanent resident status they have found an apartment and work. One assists LGBTQ asylum seekers in a program run by a Calgary agency for newcomers. The other, a talented photographer, is going to school and working part-time as a barista. To repay a loan to secure their apartment, he photographed a community garden during the growing season. The community gardeners were so pleased with his work that they used some of his images to create a calendar as a fundraiser.

The story of the half welcome continues. Jean-Nicolas Beuze, the UNHCR representative in Canada, suggests that Canada can take a major step forward in its refugee policies by encouraging non-profit organizations that serve people with disabilities to take a lead in sponsoring refugees with disabilities. While refugee advocates see accepting refugees as a legal and moral imperative, there continue to be discrepancies between public goodwill and government actions. The Canadian Council on Refugees reports that 275,000 refugees have come to Canada through private sponsorships since 1979. The organization notes that, at present, non-Syrian refugees, especially those from Africa, face considerable bureaucratic delays in processing.

Canada's somewhat cautious approach to those seeking asylum here has kept the country generally free of conflict or untoward incidents that would jeopardize the reputations of refugees or public support for them.

But the door has never been wide open; nor has Canada ever had to take in hundreds of thousands of refugees at a time, a situation some countries have recently faced.

Since 2017, the pressure on the system here has increased. Many Canadians are wondering how we should handle the thousands of "irregular" border crossings that have occurred. Considering Canada's sometimes-yes and sometimes-no response to asylum seekers and its historic preference for processing claimants outside the country, the growing challenge of irregular border crossings will require creative solutions that are both humanitarian and fair to genuine refugees who cannot make it to our borders.

WELCOME QOTLAISH FAMILY
WELCOME to Canada!
Qotlaish Family
مرحبا!

COURTESY OF GEORGE MELNYK

The Personal Connection

I was part of a private group that sponsored a Syrian refugee family from Lebanon that arrived on December 28, 2016. We provided them with accommodation and a monthly stipend for living expenses, helped them to get health and dental care, accompanied them to open a bank account, and helped to enrol both the parents and the children in schools. We had Arabic speakers in our group who facilitated communication.

Now the Qotlaish family has a car, the children are progressing in school, and the parents are working on improving their English before going to work.

They seem happy, and so is our group; but it was not always clear sailing. We spent months fighting for the family to get its child-benefit payments for their three children. We also had to pitch in as tutors in English for the parents and in math for the two older children.

The effort has been worth it. We feel strongly that private sponsorship offers refugees a better chance of integration into Canadian society because of the personal touch. – *George Melnyk*

Beer purchased in Quebec and transported to another province led to a Supreme Court case that involved competing historians' interpretations.

THE CANADIAN PRESS/MARIO BEAUREGARD

A case of refined distinctions

Supreme Court beer decision leaves historians and lawmakers to their own debates.

History is not the past; it is an argument about the past. When a historian writes a history, there is every chance that other historians will soon write other histories that reject or at least modify the first one. This argument rarely ends, and historical truth remains unsettled. Historians trust that this zigzag process gradually contributes to a richer understanding of the past, and maybe of the present, too.

With courts, things are different. When judges bring down the gavel on some historically fraught legal question, the argument is over, and this is the law.

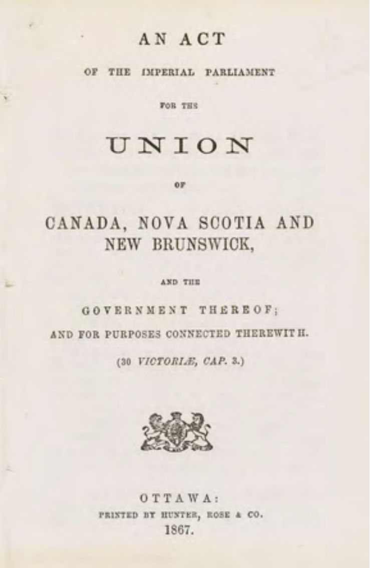
So I was a little nervous last winter when an affidavit I had written on a historical question became part of a case at the Supreme Court of Canada. I did not want the learned judges to rule my history wrong, but I was not certain that I wanted to see my historical opinion permanently enshrined in the law as right, either.

The issue? Beer. "Free beer," actually. And also the constitution of Canada.

When Gérard Comeau of Tracadie, New Brunswick, drove home with his trunk full of bargain-priced beer and liquor he had picked up just across the provincial border in Quebec, could New Brunswick prosecute him for violating its control of liquor sales in the province? Or was he protected by Section 121, the line in the Canadian constitution declaring that the products of any province of Canada must be "admitted free" to any other?

Comeau and his backers wanted his beer to be admitted free. But they also wanted more than that. Some argued that almost any provincial law that inconvenienced a business operating across provincial lines — from liquor control, to truck-safety regulations, to medicare — had to be a violation of Section 121. Taken to the limit, Section 121 could nearly abolish the provinces, at least as far as regulating or encouraging local economic activity. Was that what the constitution had meant since 1867?

Comeau's lawyers advanced a profoundly historical argument. When the constitution's makers said "admitted free," his lawyers argued, they must have meant a country where no impediments to interprovincial trade would be tolerated. Business historian Andrew Smith backed them up with a deeply researched mass of historical evidence.



AN ACT
OF THE IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT
FOR THE
UNION
OF
CANADA, NOVA SCOTIA AND
NEW BRUNSWICK,
AND THE
GOVERNMENT THEREOF;
AND FOR PURPOSES CONNECTED THEREWITH.
(30 *VICTORIÆ, CAP.* 3.)

OTTAWA:
PRINTED BY HUNTER, ROSE & CO.
1867.

Left: The front page of the *Constitution Act* of 1867. Right: Justices of the Supreme Court of Canada pose for a group photo in Ottawa on February 5, 2018. In April, the court ruled to restrict the transportation of beer across provincial borders.

LEFT: LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA. RIGHT: THE CANADIAN PRESS/FRED CHARTRAND

No, that is not what Section 121 means at all, responded New Brunswick — and, eventually, every other province, too. This posed a big constitutional question, to say the least. Comeau's case went rapidly up to the Supreme Court of Canada.

I am no lawyer, but I have written a couple of books about the making of the Canadian constitution. Despite the historical arguments for Comeau, I was pretty sure the Confederation makers had not intended to sustain the provinces of Canada and to abolish them at the same time. One uniform tariff for Canada, and no customs posts at provincial borders? Sure. But both before and after Confederation many of the constitution's makers were provincial politicians, and Section 121 had not inhibited them from using the provinces' constitutional powers to support and to regulate the economy within their jurisdictions.

Lawyers for one of the provinces asked me to write an affidavit to that effect in a separate Section 121 case, and suddenly there it was among the materials before the Supreme Court of Canada.

When the Supreme Court ruled on the Comeau case in April, it turned out that the judges had no intention of enshrining in law one or another of the duelling historians' interpretations. Comeau's lawyers had brought an "originalist" vision of the Canadian constitution to the Supreme Court: If they could show what the constitution's makers originally meant when they wrote the constitutional text, then all the court could do would be to enforce that original meaning. The Supreme Court of Canada has not been enthusiastic for originalist judging.

> **Judges should not be held hostage to any historian's version of history, the Supreme Court decided in its ruling on the Gérard Comeau beer case.**

The Fathers of Confederation used words like "free," and "person," and "marriage" — but Canadians' understandings of what freedom means, or who is legally a person, or what a marriage is, have changed over the years. And Canadian constitutional interpretation has changed with them. This is the "living tree" vision of a constitution. Judges interpret the words of the constitution, not the minds of lawmakers from long ago.

Courts should not be held hostage to any historian's version of history, the judges decided in their Comeau ruling, and they shored up their point by noting that the historical affidavits before them did not even agree. The court made a ruling on constitutional law — and the judges concluded unanimously that neither Section 121 nor any other couple of words could undermine the architecture of a constitutional text that divides powers between a powerful central government and powerful provinces. If we yearn for free or, at least, freer circulation of beer and wine among our provinces, we can tell our provincial governments to make it so. The Supreme Court will not do it for us.

I found the Supreme Court's legal finding about provincial powers and Section 121 close enough to my own view of constitutional history that I was quietly satisfied that my history was "right." But that was never the point.

The Supreme Court of Canada's decision on free beer is good for law and good for history. Politicians and judges make the law, but everyone can have historical views. Historians are free to continue to debate constitutional history — over a beer, if we like.

Christopher Moore comments in every issue of *Canada's History*.

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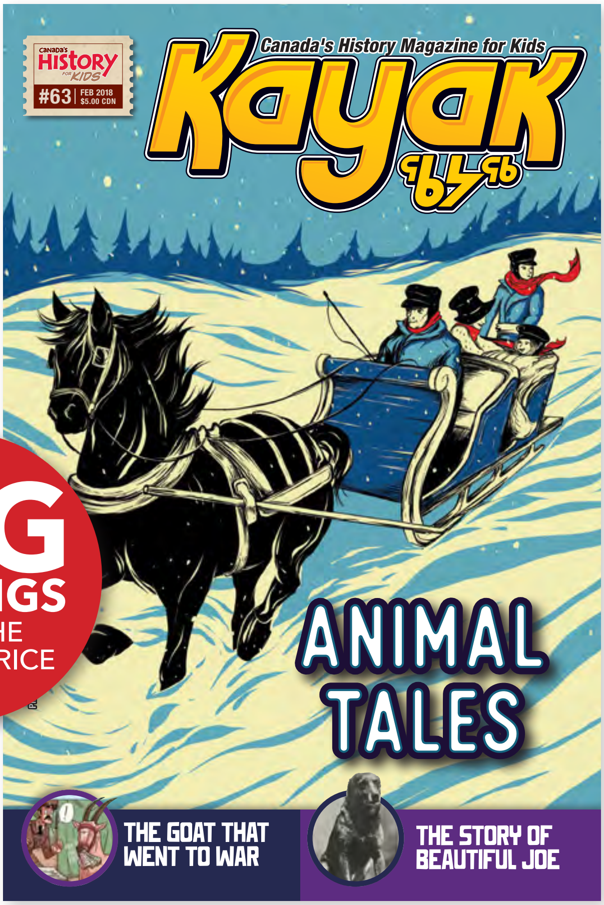
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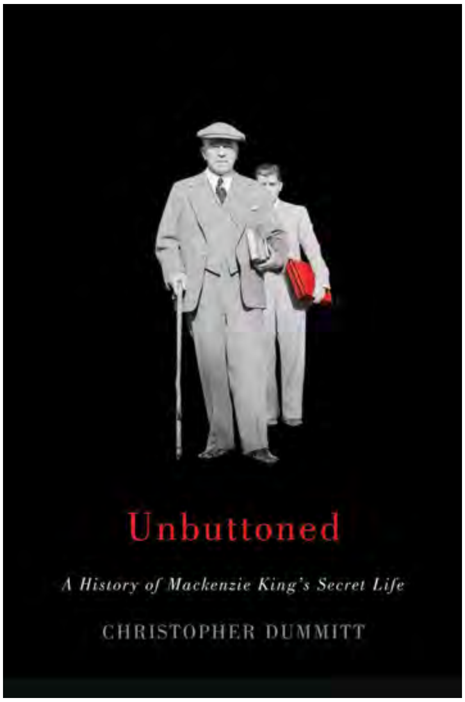


REPUTATION SAVING

Unbuttoned: A History of Mackenzie King's Secret Life

by Christopher Dummitt
McGill-Queen's University Press,
341 pages, $34.95

Christopher Dummitt has written a fascinating book on the Mackenzie King diaries, and in doing so he has also provided much insight into King and the history of his reputation. The diaries, now readily available online, were written on a regular basis by Canada's longest-serving prime minister from a very early age. They are a record of King's thoughts, fears, prejudices, and daily expenditures, and they give us invaluable insight into his character and personality as well a chronicle of his age.

Dummitt's focus is the saga of the diary itself. William Lyon Mackenzie King never intended that his daily log would become a public document. Indeed, he gave clear instructions in his will that the document should be destroyed by his executors. This never happened, because Norman Robertson, Jack Pickersgill, Fred McGregor, and Kaye Lamb quickly realized on King's death in 1948 that this daily record was too valuable a public document to be allowed to succumb completely to King's private wishes.

Yet, at the same time, the executors were determined to control what could be seen and what could be said about the diaries, an exercise in control and censorship that soon led to real battles. King's diary was not, they discovered, just about public events. It also touched upon his personal thoughts and predilections, including, most notably, a lifelong interest in spiritualism. His participation in seances — efforts to reach his mother and other relatives "on the other side" — were known to his assistants and aides at the time and feature at many points in the document. The issue soon arose of what to do about the diaries' "personal side."

The bureaucratic culture of the time was one of great secrecy — and Dummitt insightfully describes the tensions around the clash between this culture and the demands of the academic community for greater openness and candour about the iconic document. Pickersgill, assisted by young academic Donald Forster, brought out volumes of *The Mackenzie King Record*, but these were carefully edited and were subsequently criticized for not showing the whole story. As time went on, more researchers insisted on greater openness and accountability, at times to their own detriment. Eventually, after many years, the decision was made by the executors to allow access to the entire diaries — except for one missing volume and a notable decision to burn an additional set of papers that were said to be "strictly personal" and "purely spiritual reflections."

At the time of his death King was widely seen as a truly remarkable politician and statesman. The fear of his executors was that a full disclosure would lead to a series of attacks on his reputation. The first expression of this was a *Maclean's* magazine piece by Blair Fraser on King's trips to a spiritual advisor in London. This was followed by a critical analysis of King by H.S. Ferns and Bernard Ostry, based on the premise that King's involvement with the wealthy Rockefellers made him an enemy of working people, rather than their friend.

Charles Stacey's revelation of King's tortured sexual experiences, entitled *A Very Double Life*, was exactly what the executors feared would happen. Colonel Stacey, a soldier and military historian who had a very negative view of Canada's wartime leader, found what he concluded was proof that King consorted with prostitutes and led a double life. A more balanced view would be that King was never fully comfortable with his sexuality and that the particulars of his sex life remain uncertain. Stacey's portrait of King was unflattering, to say the least.

We are now at a point where warts and all is the order of the day. The diaries don't tell the whole story, not because they are incomplete but because no diary can tell the full impact of an individual on the events of his time. We know that King was an appeaser and had a completely unrealistic view of Hitler, as the diaries reveal; but we also know that King was an effective, if exasperating, leader of a country prone to division and deep sectarian quarrels. The self-centred fussiness revealed by the document does not do justice to his public achievements.

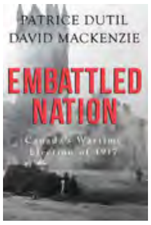
It is fascinating to see the difference between our own historical culture and that of our neighbours to the south. In the United States, no month passes without a new biography of leaders whose lives have been analyzed over and over again. Here, we are lucky to see more than a few in a decade. Narrative history struggles to stay alive in Canada, and Dummitt's account of the ups and downs of King's diary and his reputation is a welcome sign of vigour and life in Canadian historical scholarship.

Reviewed by **Bob Rae**, who is serving as special envoy of the prime minister to Myanmar and is a lawyer at Olthuis Kleer Townshend LLP and a distinguished senior fellow at the University of Toronto. An author, speaker, and advisor on public policy issues, he is an avid student of history.

WORST. YEAR. EVER.

Embattled Nation: Canada's Wartime Election of 1917

by Patrice Dutil and David MacKenzie
Dundurn, 360 pages, $29.99



Misery loves company, so it's good to be reminded that things used to be worse. The authors of this exhaustive and engaging new volume chose 1917 as the absolute rock bottom in Canadian history. Tens of thousands of Canadians were killed and wounded overseas, Halifax was devastated by the great explosion, and, in the intensely fought and deeply divisive election of that year, the authors write, the country itself "was almost lost by politicians blinded by ambition, lacking in imagination, and often paralyzed by incompetence and dithering." And that broadside comes even before the preface is over.

Dutil and MacKenzie, both from Ryerson University, sustain this level of unsparing criticism throughout, but their judgments never seem unwarranted or anachronistic. On the contrary, over the course of several chapters they take pains to situate the political failings of Prime Minister Robert Borden and aging Opposition leader Wilfrid Laurier in the context of the era's complex questions of language, national identity, and war.

Embattled Nation might be considered a sequel of sorts to the authors' earlier *Canada 1911*, which examined the momentous Borden-Laurier election of that year. The authors carefully revisit and untangle some of the themes of their earlier book, examining the complex interplay of nationalism and imperialism that continues to befuddle students today. For example, the schools question — the issue of whether or not Catholic and French education would be offered in provincial schools outside Quebec — is a topic dreaded by students and lecturers alike.

Here, however, Dutil and MacKenzie demonstrate that the schools question embodied the whole debate over whether or not Canadians could have a shared conception of nationhood. This

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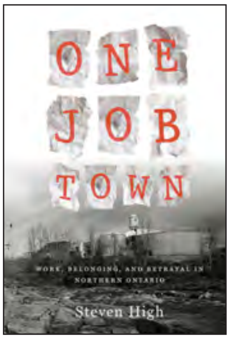
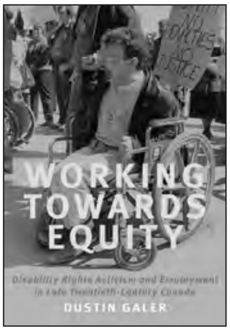
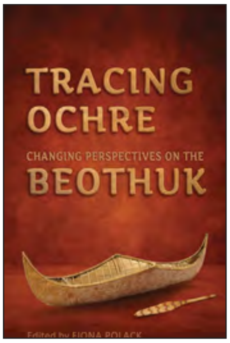

question resonated powerfully at a time when national unity was called upon. Ontario's Resolution 17, which restricted French education in the province, became a particular source of animus. French-Canadian opponents of the war, including the eloquent but increasingly strident Henri Bourassa, seized upon the resolution as an exemplar of what they characterized as the hypocrisy of the war effort. "Everything is being done to hide the supreme danger that our nationality could be annihilated by British imperialism," Bourassa proclaimed in one speech.

These pre-existing social tensions came to a head as the scale of Canada's war effort vastly exceeded initial expectations. Borden returned from his early 1917 trip overseas convinced that conscription could not be avoided, and it is hard to escape the conclusion that he was correct. But the authors argue that this in no way justifies what followed in the 1917 election, which, they say, was "fought on the issue of conscription, but decided on the basis of identity."

Borden and Laurier entirely failed to resolve or even to adequately address the divisive questions of identity. Far from the noble statesman, Laurier comes across here as exhausted, dithering, and even cowardly, subjected to incessant attacks across the entire political spectrum. Meanwhile, Borden, ignorant of French Canada and politically hamfisted, was so convinced of the necessity of conscription that he adopted plainly corrupt means to secure victory in the December election. "Never has a government so failed its people," the authors conclude.

Recently, historian Patrick Dennis has argued persuasively that those who were conscripted under the *Military Service Act*, while comparatively few in number, played a critical role in shoring up the strength of Canadian infantry units during the decisive Hundred Days campaign of August to November, 1918. But the authors wisely avoid arguing about whether or not the ends justified the means.

They might, however, have given a nod to some of the recent demographic work on the Canadian Expeditionary Force that has challenged the assumption of low enlistment in the CEF by French Canadians. The authors seem to take at face value contemporaneous assessments; but, as Jonathan Vance and others have argued, many young Quebecers enlisted outside the province, creating a false impression that French Canadians as a whole were inordinately opposed to military service.

Was 1917 really the worst year in Canadian history? Maybe. A very good case could be made for 1918, too; but the election of 1917 and the *Military Service Act* set the stage for the following dramas. Moreover, the issue of conscription, the authors conclude, rent the national fabric for decades to come, even sowing the seeds of the separatist movement.

Dutil and MacKenzie are top-tier scholars who have written a bracing narrative that will be admired by academics and general readers alike. I hope they appreciate that I now have to rewrite my lecture on the election of 1917. Or maybe instead I'll just assign *Embattled Nation*, a very good book about a terrible, terrible year.

Reviewed by **Graham Broad**, an associate professor of history at King's University College at Western University.

REBELLIOUS PATRIOT

Freethinker: The Life and Works of Éva Circé-Côté

by Andrée Lévesque, translated by Lazer Lederhendler

Between the Lines, 426 pages, $34.95

FREETHINKER

Much has been written about the Quiet Revolution, the period of wide-scale and rapid change that transformed Quebec society from a conservative Catholic bastion to the secular liberal stronghold it is today. According to the standard narrative, the Quiet Revolution was kick-started by the 1960 election of Premier Jean Lesage, which brought an end to the long-entrenched alliance of the Church and the local political elite.

According to Andrée Lévesque, historians' focus on traditional Quebec society's conservatism has "constructed a past that leaves little room for entire generations of progressives." Those who have been overshadowed — the intellectual predecessors to the Quiet Revolution — include Éva Circé-Côté, the subject of Lévesque's 2010 book that has now been translated into English.

Circé-Côté (1871–1949) lived a rich and varied life. The first librarian to work within Montreal's nascent public library system, she was also a poet and a journalist. At rest and at work, her life revolved around words and the powers contained within them. Her inspiration came from the Patriotes of the 1837 rebellion, with their values of liberalism, secularism, republicanism, and inclusiveness. For Circé-Côté, one did not have to be pure laine Québécois in order to be a patriot, as she believed that "heroes belong to all races and to all religions."

She was deeply concerned about the survival of her people's language and culture, but this did not make her a separatist, as she felt Confederation granted sufficient powers to safeguard the province's unique character. Furthermore, she feared an even greater concentration of power in the hands of the clergy should Quebec leave Canada.

Despite sharing republican ideals with the United States, Circé-Côté worried that Quebec's southern neighbours posed too great a risk of cultural assimilation. She was no fan of being dragged into global conflicts but nonetheless remained an adamant supporter of Quebec's place within the British Empire, saying it provided cultural safeguards that afforded "a life as pleasant as any we could imagine, making us the envy of the entire world."

Circé-Côté was a prolific writer, having released her work under aliases that include Julien Saint-Michel, Colombine, Musette, and Arthur Maheu. These pen names allowed Circé-Côté to write about such frowned-upon subjects as women's suffrage, wage parity, and the toleration of regulated prostitution. As it turns out, it was her writing under the masculine identity of Saint-Michel that first brought her biographer Lévesque to the topic. Having long wondered who this progressive journalist was — possibly a Belgian trade unionist, he reasoned at one point, due to the unique intellectual current — two decades passed before he found his answer. Had this connection not been made, it is unlikely that a book of this sort could have been written, given the lack of personal accounts of Circé-Côté's life.

Circé-Côté was "an original, a rebel, an avant-garde woman," according to Lévesque. However, she did not operate in isolation. With further study of this pre-Quiet Revolution period, Lévesque believes historians will uncover "a Quebec that is less bleak than the usual representations of it, less submissive, less monolithic, more complex and more open to influences from abroad." Circé-Côté and her fellow progressives — including the likes of Robertine Barry, Anne-Marie Gleason-Huguenin, and Louvigny de Montigny — may be largely unknown in their home province today, but this does not reflect their contributions.

I credit the publisher for releasing this translated edition of *Freethinker*, because the vast majority of Quebec's historiography will never see an English-language release. As a historian and a Canadian interested in breaking down the two solitudes, I hope we see more of this.

Reviewed by **Ryan O'Connor**, a writer, a historical consultant, and the author of the J.J. Talman Award-winning *The First Green Wave: Pollution Probe and the Origins of Environmental Activism in Ontario* (UBC Press).

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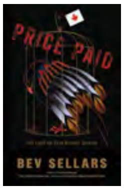
Aboriginal Rights Claims and the Making and Remaking of History

by Arthur J. Ray

McGill-Queen's University Press, 344 pages, $29.95



In their respective books, Bev Sellars and Arthur J. Ray demonstrate how the Canadian historical narrative has excluded Indigenous perspectives to the benefit of newcomers while examining the subsequent reclamation of this space through the use of history.

Sellars, a lawyer, a former chief of the Xat'sull (Soda Creek) First Nation, and the author of the award-winning book *They Called Me Number One: Secrets and Survival at an Indian Residential School*, shares her experiences as a First Nations person living under the Indian Act in her latest book, *Price Paid: The Fight for First Nations Survival*. Inspired by her work with the BC Treaty Commission, Sellars writes from a personal point of view to offer Canadians an Indigenous perspective on Indigenous-newcomer relations in Canada. She begins *Price Paid* by asking readers to consider what they know about the creation of historical documents. She then presents a list of questions that support critical thinking and highlights how historical documents can preserve biases and support continued discrimination.

As Sellars explores the different stages of the Indigenous-newcomer relationship, she invites readers to consider the First Nations perspective by asking questions that frame each chapter. For example, before the chapter discussing first contact between European and Indigenous peoples, she asks, "What if you owned a house and beautiful garden? Would you share it with others? Would you welcome them?" Then, before the chapter discussing the process of newcomer settlement, she asks, "What if your guests decided to stay? Would it still be your house?"

Sellars' book *Price Paid* shows that the intergenerational trauma of residential schools is not the only price Indigenous peoples in Canada have paid for welcoming newcomers.

In *Aboriginal Rights Claims and the Making and Remaking of History*, Ray presents a comparative study of the use of historical evidence in court proceedings regarding Aboriginal rights and treaty claims in Canada and other countries. Inspired by his experiences as an expert historical witness for the Aboriginal title suit *Delgamuukw v. Regina*, 1997, and for other legal cases throughout Canada, Ray explores the changes that have occurred both in legal systems and in historical scholarship.

A major legal change explored in this book is the relaxing of the hearsay rule, which made room for the acceptance of oral-history testimonies and the subsequent prioritization of Indigenous voices within legal proceedings. Ray goes on to explain how these changes affected the ways in which historians research and write history. He even explores the issue of revisionist history. Readers gain a basic understanding of how Indigenous rights and treaty claims have influenced both the courts and the study of history in different countries.
— Jessica Knapp

Trudeau's Tango: Alberta Meets Pierre Elliott Trudeau, 1968–1972

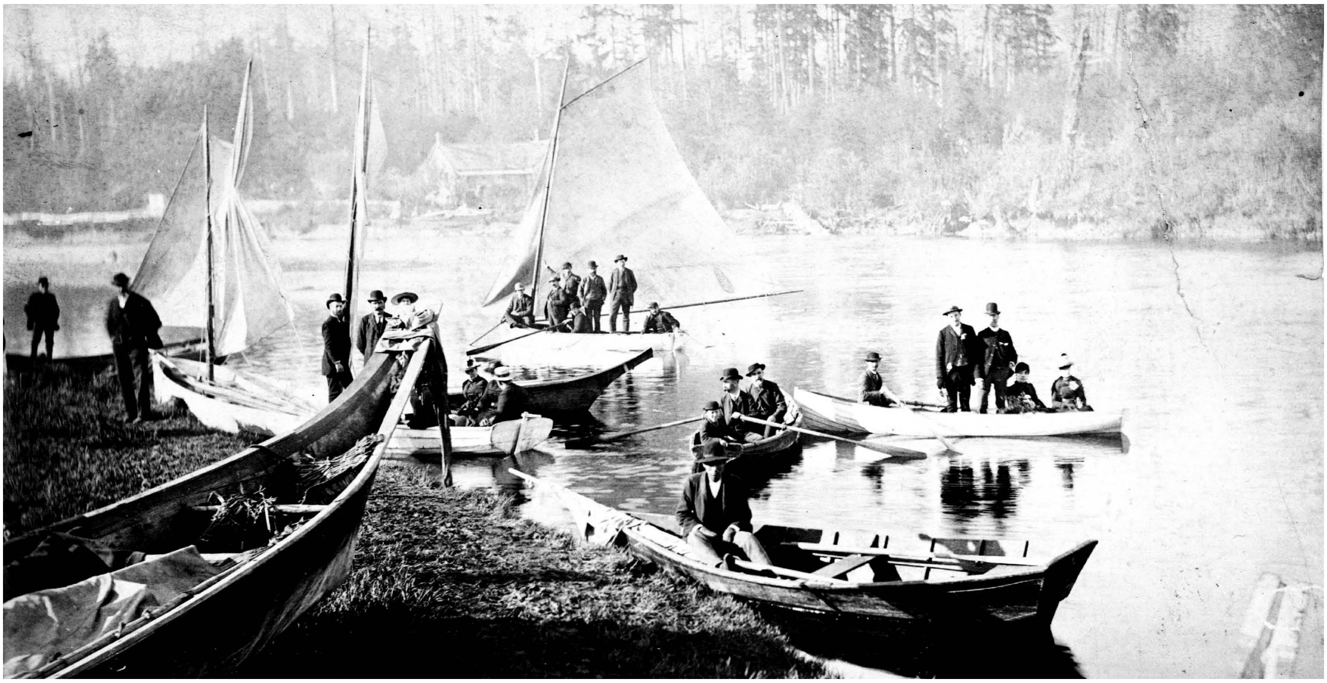
by Darryl Raymaker

Gutteridge Books, 380 pages, $24.95

Trudeau's Tango
DARRYL RAYMAKER

On July 12, 1971, Pierre Elliott Trudeau donned a white cowboy hat, hopped on an Appaloosa horse, and joined the Calgary Stampede parade as grand marshal. Throngs of people cheered him on, but Trudeau would never again be that popular in Alberta.

In his book *Trudeau's Tango*, Darryl Raymaker, a retired Calgary lawyer



PLEASURE CRAFT Seymour Creek in North Vancouver, British Columbia, has long been a popular location for recreational boating and angling, as seen in this photo from circa 1890. The creek is one of many channels connected to the Strait of Georgia that are collectively known as the North Salish Sea. The network of coastal waterways stretches some three hundred kilometres from Vancouver and Victoria in the south to Powell River and Campbell River in the north. In *Views of the Salish Sea: One Hundred and Fifty Years of Change around the Strait of Georgia* (Harbour Publishing, 288 pages, $39.95) Howard Macdonald Stewart examines the effects of the past century and a half of development on the peoples, the flora, and the fauna of the region.

IMAGE A-03311 COURTESY OF THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES

and long-time member of the Liberal Party, traces the rise and fall of Alberta Liberals from 1968 to 1972. Raymaker's experience as a political activist during this time provides insight into not only the events he describes but also the people who were involved. His book balances his personal recollections with scholarly research and strong images.

Pierre Elliott Trudeau had to win over the West. Albertans historically did not vote Liberal, but in 1968 the federal party secured four seats. As Raymaker describes, "Trudeaumania in Alberta was real; the boss had worked his magic."

Over the next four years that initial optimism subsided. Albertans became increasingly disenchanted with Trudeau. Raymaker explores this change in sentiment and details the factors that contributed to the downfall of the Liberal Party in Alberta.

In the fifty years since the events portrayed in *Trudeau's Tango*, Alberta has been staunchly conservative, fiercely independent, and deeply invested in oil — and the province now finds itself working with another Trudeau's federal government. Raymaker's book provides historical context that allows us to better understand the current relationship between Alberta and the Liberal Party. — *Brooke Campbell*

Working for the Common Good: Canadian Women Politicians

by Madelyn Holmes

Fernwood Publishing, 182 pages, $25

WORKING for the COMMON GOOD
MADELYN HOLMES

Working for the Common Good highlights the work of eight Canadian women: Agnes Macphail, Thérèse Casgrain, Grace MacInnis, Pauline Jewett, Margaret Mitchell, Lynn McDonald, Audrey McLaughlin, and Alexa McDonough. All were social-democrat politicians who fought against economic and societal inequality, poverty, and injustice and who promoted prison reform, disarmament, and world peace.

Author Madelyn Holmes is an American who became intrigued with Canadian female activists, particularly the large number of them who participated in the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation party, which became the New Democratic Party in 1961.

Holmes illustrates how each woman's past skills helped to influence her future political policies. For instance, Macphail, a former rural schoolteacher, took issue with the growth in military cadet training. And, prior to entering into politics, Casgrain ardently campaigned for women's right to vote in Quebec. When elected, she fought for family-allowance cheques to be issued to mothers, rather than to fathers.

Their work in politics did not come without sacrifice. As Macphail said, "When I am sixty ... I shall probably look back on this life I have chosen and regret every bit of it.... I will wish I had married and had children and had been a happy country woman."

Working for the Common Good is well-documented and provides an interesting overview of the women's personal and political lives as well as the inroads they made in Canadian public life. — *Beverley Tallon*

Military historian Tim Cook.

Q&A

Down time

Life in the trenches provoked a variety of creative impulses.

TIM COOK
THE SECRET HISTORY OF SOLDIERS

Tim Cook's forthcoming book The Secret History of Soldiers: How Canadians Survived the Great War *looks at the daily lives of combatants during the First World War. Non-combat activities ranged from producing trench newspapers and live entertainment to the creation of a feeling of home and the development of unique words and phrases. Alison Nagy spoke with Cook about his book and about how these and other coping mechanisms helped Canadian soldiers to endure the horrors of war.*

Why was it important for you to fill in the gaps in the study of the Great War?
I've been studying the Great War for about twenty years, and I've written on many aspects — battles, commanders, campaigns, logistics, politics, the home front. But I've always been drawn to the soldiers, and I've always wanted to know what motivated them. How did they cope? How did they endure? The greatest way to do that, I think, is to read their letters, read their diaries, read their memoirs — and I have had a great pleasure in doing that over this time period.

I've read thousands and thousands of letters, and that is where this book comes out of — their writings, their thoughts, their beliefs. It's called *The Secret History of Soldiers* partly because the history I am talking about — this cultural history, the use of culture as a shield, the creation of a unique soldier society to cope and endure — is not part of the official record. . . .

So it's a very intimate history. It's very much about the soldiers themselves, and, I think, it tells a very different story about Canada's First World War.

Can you share a bit about the experience you had when writing this book? Was it different than the process you've had for your other books?
This is a book that goes back to the beginnings, to when I was a young historian. I was at the Royal Military College of Canada and was doing a master's degree there in 1995–96. I was researching gas warfare in the First World War, and that became my first book, *No Place to Run*. . . .

As I was researching gas, I began to see references to this unique culture that I'm writing about here: the songs they sang, the slang they used, the swearing that is prevalent in this very masculine society, the creation of trench newspapers, theatre behind the lines, sports — all of which is really the focus of this book. That isn't to say that I've been working on this non-stop for twenty years. This is my eleventh book. . . . But I have, to some degree, been living with this story for twenty years, and I felt it was now time to write it.

What was the effect of the camaraderie between soldiers?
One of the most prevalent tropes, or narratives, or themes of the First World War is shell shock. . . . Novelists, playwrights, and filmmakers almost always include shell shock within any study of the First World War, and it's important to acknowledge that mental trauma. But the question that always struck me is, why didn't they all break down? If you spent a year, or eighteen months, or two years, or four years at the front, how did you survive?

And so that was really the core of what I was looking at — and it's the culture, I argue, that is absolutely crucial to exploring the many ways that soldiers put up shields to deal with this traumatic landscape of of death and destruction in which they are fighting, and living, and scrambling to survive.

To read more of the conversation with Tim Cook, visit CanadasHistory.ca/SoldiersLives.

PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE CANADA

CANADA'S
HISTORY

CANADA'S HISTORY SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

HUDSON'S BAY
Kayak
CELEBRATE CANADA

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The sesquicentennial of Canadian Confederation inspired an ambitious agenda for Canada's National History Society. Fuelled by an extraordinary level of investment from public and private funders, 2017 saw Canada's History introduce ten new initiatives that have taken the organization to increased levels of reach and engagement.

We entered the year with evidence, through Vividata's 2016 reports, showing that Canada's History reaches more than 1.1 million readers in print and online.

Our goal was to grow this exceptional reach and reader engagement. We undertook initiatives to build on our strength as a valued history publisher, a reliable provider of rich digital content, and a national organization that honours excellence, builds connections, and gives voice to the people and projects that advance learning about history.

The year featured a highly successful mass distribution of commemorative issues of *Kayak* and *Canada's History*; international profile in partnership with the Canadian Museum of History with a new Snapshots of Canada exhibition; and long-term impact with the launch of ninety years of *The Beaver* "in your pocket" featuring mobile access to a new searchable Canada's History Archive.

We held a highly productive meeting with national educators that charted a course for student learning and for new approaches to history education in line with provincial curriculum; and we celebrated Montreal 375 with print and digital features in French and in English that flew off the shelves in Montreal museums. We look forward to continuing to build on this momentum to help Canadians to become even more engaged with their shared past.

— David Ross

The 2017 Young Citizens recipients visit the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, Quebec.

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Canada's History Society was founded in 1994 to popularize Canadian history. The Society's work includes *Canada's History* magazine, CanadasHistory.ca, *Kayak: Canada's History Magazine for Kids*, and the Governor General's History Awards.

HUDSON'S BAY

The Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation is the History Society's founding patron. It remains our largest private donor, with an annual grant essential to supporting the delivery of our programs.

On the Cover:

Clockwise from top left: Board member and historian Michèle Dagenais, the Honourable Diane Lebouthillier, and Canada's History staff member Jean-Philippe Proulx with youth award winner Isaac Landry; Young Citizen Keyshawn Sawyer; Maureen Matthews and David Swanson accept the Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Museums from Governor General Julie Payette; students read *Kayak*; historian and writer Danielle Metcalfe-Chenail moderates the Canada's History Forum; celebrating the 2017 Teaching Award recipients at the History Makers Dinner; Elder Claudette Commanda welcomes attendees to the Canada's History Forum.

DAVID ROSS PHOTO: NORTHERN ARTISTS. BELOW LEFT: BRITTANY GAWLEY. COVER: BRITTANY GAWLEY, RIDEAU HALL, MARK REID .

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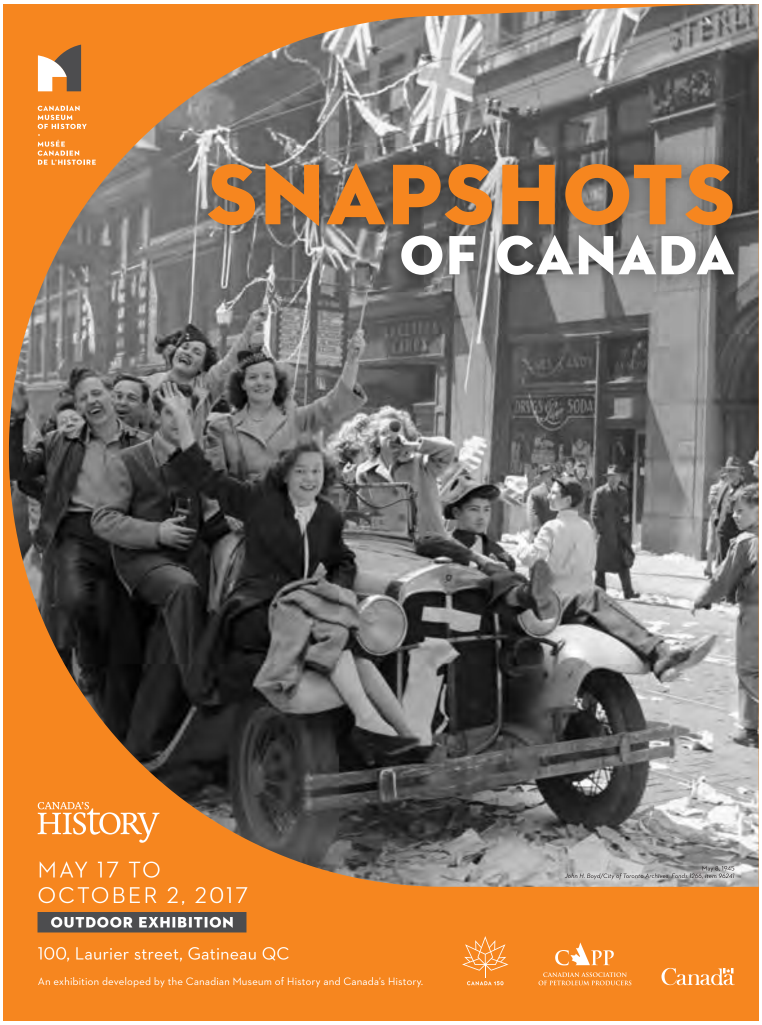
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May 8, 1945
John H. Boyd/City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1266, item 96241
CANADA'S HISTORY
MAY 17 TO OCTOBER 2, 2017
OUTDOOR EXHIBITION
100, Laurier street, Gatineau QC
An exhibition developed by the Canadian Museum of History and Canada's History.
CANADA 150
CAPP CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PETROLEUM PRODUCERS
Canada

A poster advertises the Snapshots of Canada exhibition.

Above from left: *Wait for me Daddy* features a boy chasing his father as the Second World War soldier marches off to war. *Standoff at Oka* depicts a tense moment between a soldier and a Mohawk warrior at Oka, Quebec, in 1990.

SNAPSHOTS OF CANADA TRAVELLING EXHIBITION

Canada's History worked with the Canadian Museum of History to produce an international travelling exhibition that showcases some of Canada's most iconic photographs. Inspired by our books *100 Photos that Changed Canada* (2009) and *100 Days that Changed Canada* (2011), the exhibition was launched on May 17, 2017, at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, Quebec. The exhibition paired compelling images with texts by well-known writers and historians and is available in both indoor and outdoor formats. The Canadian Museum of History reports that Canadian consulates requesting the exhibit include Mexico City, Seoul, Sydney, Berlin, and Paris.

PROJECT PORTAGE SETS SAIL

Canada's History was excited to launch "Project Portage" with the help of The Molson Foundation. This special initiative is a collaboration with history organizations in Quebec to share information and stories between Quebec and the rest of Canada. Key projects in 2017 included distributing 13,500 copies of a special magazine celebrating the 375th anniversary of Montreal and the creation of a video series about Montreal. We are developing opportunities for "voyageur" interns that foster stronger relationships among francophone and anglophone historians. Canada's History extends its gratitude to all of the Quebec organizations involved in the project.

NUMÉRO SPÉCIAL
REGARD SUR LE MYSTÈRE HOCHELAGA
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375 MONTRÉAL
COMMENT VILLE-MARIE A DÉJOUÉ SON DESTIN EN DEVENANT LA VILLE LA PLUS COSMOPOLITE AU CANADA
+ MONTRÉAL AU FIL DU TEMPS | CINQ MONTRÉALAIS ILLUSTRES | LE POINT DE VUE AUTOCHTONE
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VILLE-MARIE DEFIED THE ODDS TO BECOME CANADA'S MOST COSMOPOLITAN CITY
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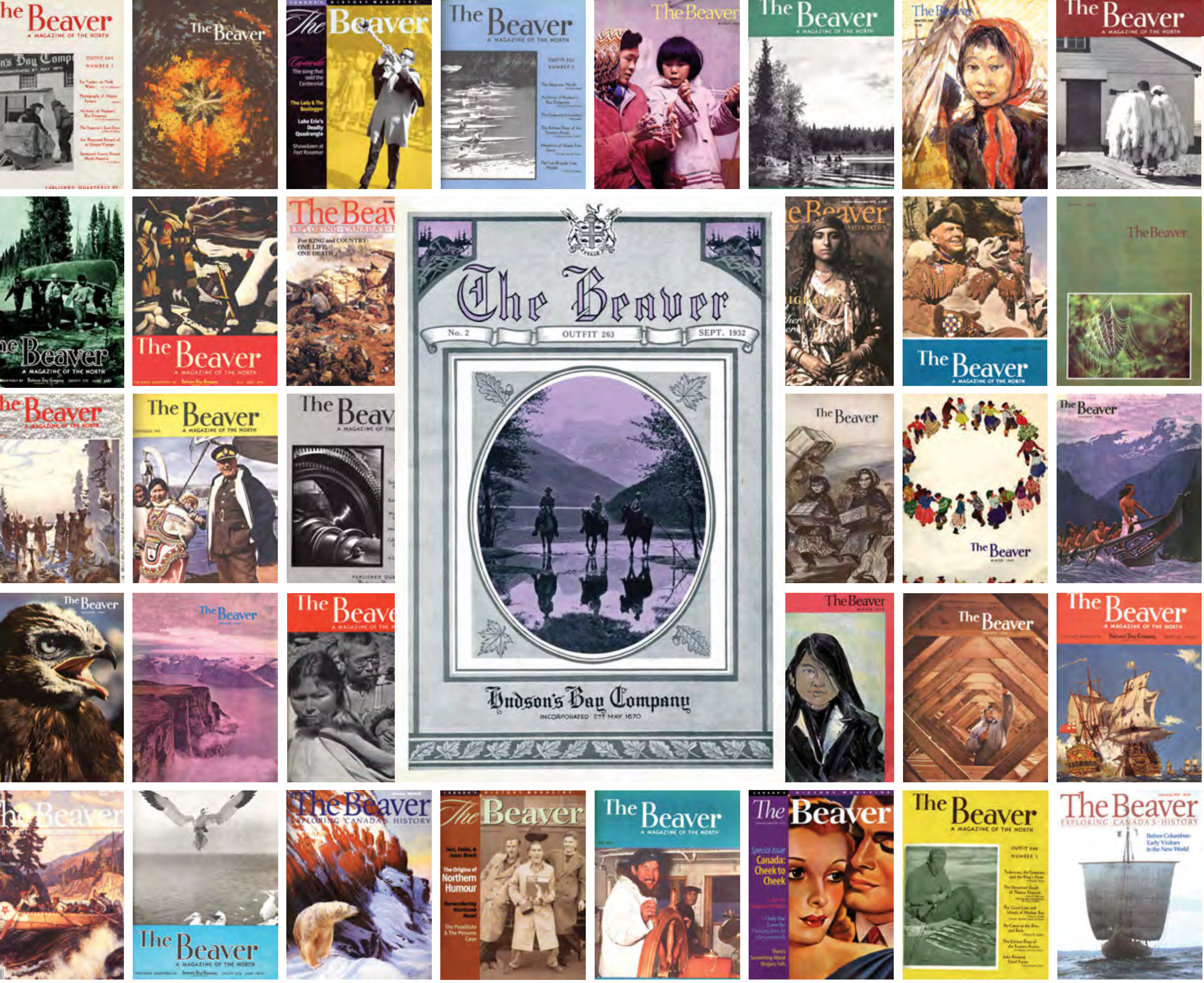
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EXPLORING CANADA'S HISTORY

CANADA'S HISTORY ARCHIVE: 90 YEARS OF HISTORY IN YOUR POCKET

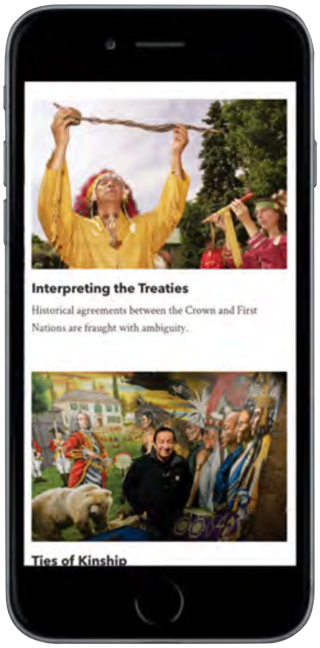
In 2017, *The Beaver*'s entire catalogue of back issues was made available online — for free — via a new mobile-responsive archive.

Canada's History Archive featuring *The Beaver* allows users to browse stories about the people and places of the North, as well as the history of Canada from coast, to coast, to coast.

The archive also features issues of *Canada's History* magazine and *Kayak: Canada's History Magazine for Kids*. The sesquicentennial project was made possible thanks to a generous contribution from the Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation as well as the support of donors in the company of *Adventurers*.

In addition, the Society launched a new mobile-responsive website. Content highlights included a livestream of the 2017 Canada's History Forum and "Voices of Vimy," a podcast that explores the fateful Great War battle through war letters written by soldiers and their loved ones.

"Voices of Vimy" was named best podcast at the Canadian Online Publishing Awards.



Interpreting the Treaties

Historical agreements between the Crown and First Nations are fraught with ambiguity.

Ties of Kinship

SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S ISSUE
CANADA'S HISTORY
BONUS 2017 SUMMER READING GUIDE
FORMERLY THE BEAVER
BIG QUESTIONS OF CANADA
SPECIAL ESSAY PACKAGE
Featuring
ADRIENNE CLARKSON on immigration
RY MORAN on reconciliation
CHARLOTTE GRAY on culture
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MERNA FORSTER on equality
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HOW THE WORLD SAW CONFEDERATION
EXPO 67 FIFTY YEARS LATER
HISTORIC SITES CENTENNIAL

Canada's History Magazine for Kids
Kayak
SUMMER 2017
CELEBRATE CANADA
FOUNDED ON FRIENDSHIP
THE ROAD TO CONFEDERATION

CANADA 150 SPECIAL ISSUES

To mark Canada's sesquicentennial, the Society published special issues of both *Canada's History* and *Kayak* magazines.

The centrepiece of *Canada's History* was an essay package, "Big Questions of Canada," which explored key topics of importance to all Canadians.

Kayak, meanwhile, published a special "Celebrate Canada" issue in English and French versions. Both versions were distributed for free at five hundred Canada Day events across the country.

More than 225,000 copies were issued, and 10,000 more copies were given to libraries and schools. The society also produced free digital educational materials relating to the special issue. Sincere thanks goes to donors in the company of *Adventurers*, whose generous support — together with dedicated funding from Jim and Leney Richardson of Manitoba, The Molson Foundation of Quebec, and the Government of Canada — made possible this important project.

EXAMINING THE PAST

"Making History Relevant" was the theme for the 2017 Canada's History Forum. The forum, held in conjunction with the Governor General's History Awards, was a collaboration with the National Council for Public History.

Presenters included Tim Grove from the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum; Jean-Pierre Morin from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada; Dominique Trudeau from the McCord Museum; and Jan Grabowski from the University of Ottawa.

The sessions are available at: CanadasHistory.ca/HistoryForum.

LE 10e FORUM HISTOIRE CANADA

Calvin Racette, a Métis teacher and writer from the Qu'Appelle Valley in Saskatchewan, speaks at the Canada's History Forum.

TOP RIGHT BRITTANY GAWLEY

YOUNG CITIZENS
JEUNES CITOYENS

Canada's History President and CEO Janet Walker presents Young Citizen Madison with her certificate. Joining them are honour guards Christian Lagueux and Jean-Pierre Lagueux.

ENGAGING YOUTH

As part of the national program for Heritage Fairs, the top students from eighty regional Heritage Fairs across Canada were invited to create a short video about their research.

More than 180 new digital stories were posted to the national website YoungCitizens.ca (JeunesCitoyens.ca) in the spring of 2017. Following a public vote and judging process, two students from each province and territory travelled to Ottawa for the fourth Canada's History Youth Forum.

These twenty-six students spent four days exploring the nation's capital and learning from each other. As a special Canada 150 initiative, the students shared their vision for Canada's next fifty years in a video message to Canadians, which can be viewed online at YoungCitizens.ca.

In 2017, approximately 56,000 students in all provinces and territories created a project for the Heritage Fair program. An additional 108,000 students participated in the program by visiting one of the 950 local fairs across Canada.

AWARDING EXCELLENCE

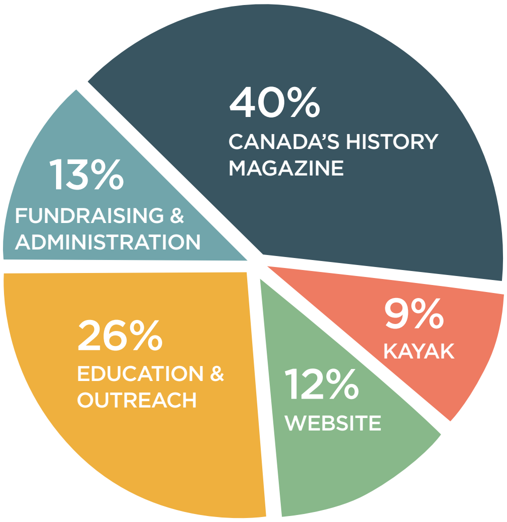
On November 22, 2017, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette presented the Governor General's History Awards in one of her first ceremonies as Canada's new Governor General. Speaking to a full audience in Rideau Hall's ballroom, Payette praised the 2017 recipients for their commitment to research, education, and storytelling.

Of particular note this year were a number of partnerships and projects that worked directly with Indigenous communities.

These include Spirit Lines, a project between the Manitoba Museum and the Garden Hill and Norway House First Nations in Manitoba; the Exploration Place Museum and Science Centre, which developed a new exhibit and learning space with the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation of Prince George, British Columbia; and educators Naomi Fortier-Fréçon and Leia Laing, who led the Treaty4Project. Sarah Carter's research into the work of Indigenous and non-Indigenous women on the prairies was also recognized at the awards.

Above: Leia Laing and Naomi Fortier-Fréçon receive their award from Governor General Julie Payette. Below right: Young Citizen Avah Solomon speaks at the History Makers gala. Below left: Member of Parliament Robert-Falcon Ouellette (centre) with youth award recipients Elly Hooker (fourth from left) and Mackenzie Anderson (second from right) and their families.

HOW YOUR DOLLARS ARE SPENT



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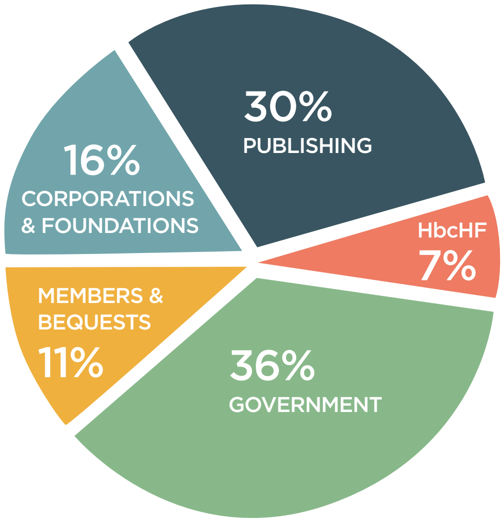

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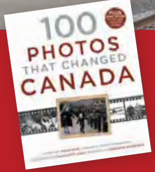
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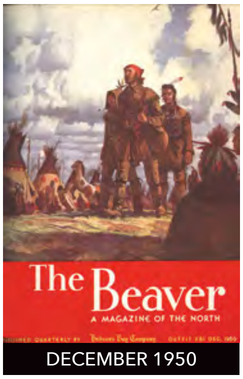
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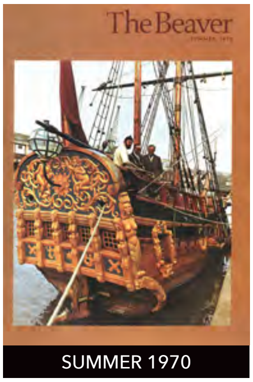

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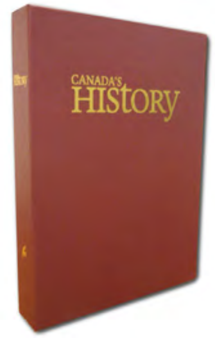
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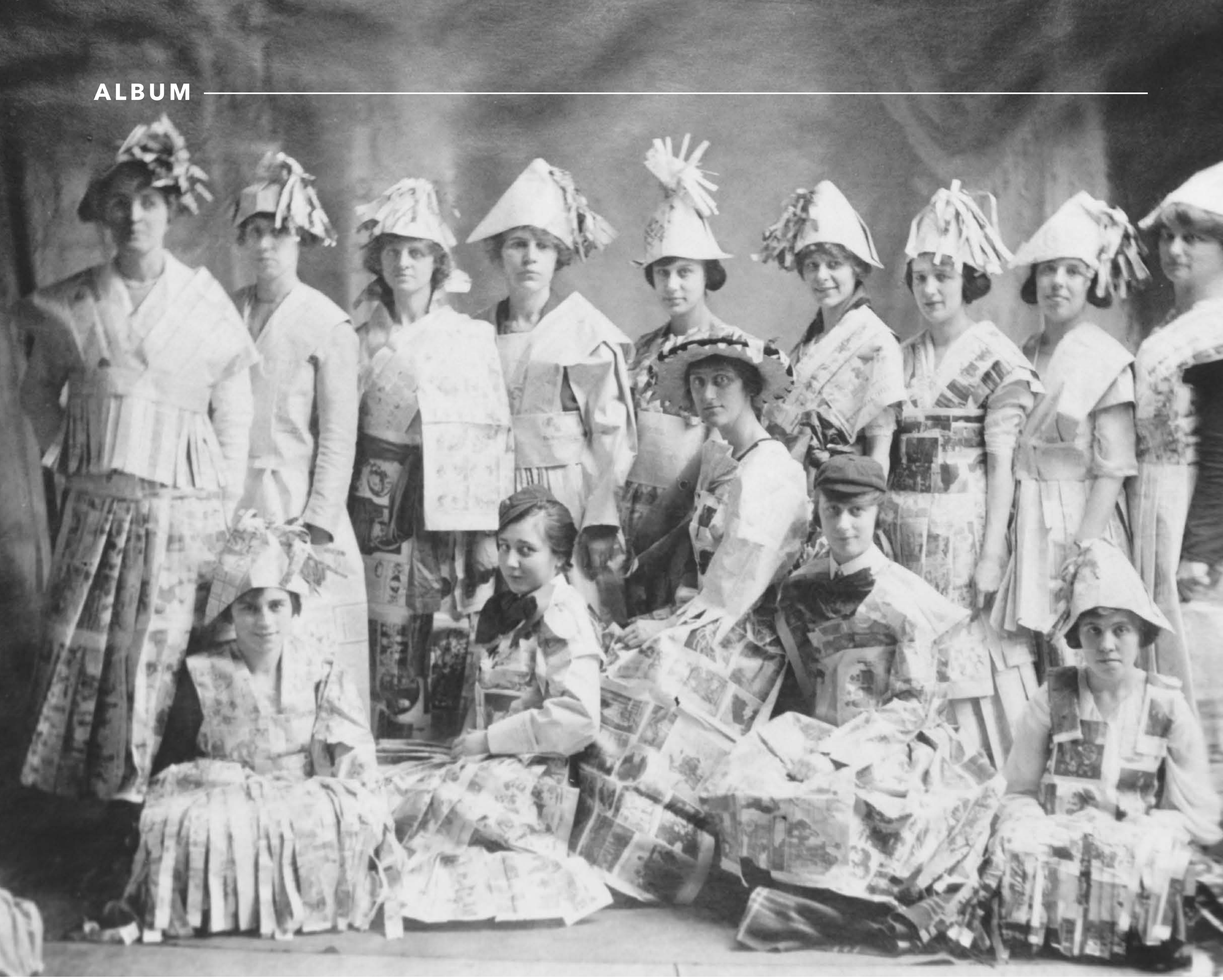

It can be done

Furniture manufacturing businesses were major employers in many Ontario towns in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In Newmarket, Ontario, it was the Office Specialty Manufacturing Company, a maker of office furniture and filing systems.

The company moved to the area in the 1890s and at its peak employed over 450 people. This delightful 1921 photo is evidence that women were an important part of that workforce.

These employees belonged to the ICBD Club. The name was taken from "It Can Be Done," a slogan the firm began using in 1919 to stimulate cost reduction and innovation. The ladies adopted it as the name of a social club that organized picnics, variety shows, trips into the country, dinners, and dances.

For their 1921 variety show, club members presented a number called "In My Sweet Little Newspaper Dress." They made costumes from pages of the town's weekly newspaper, the *Newmarket Era*, which was founded in 1852 and is still publishing.

Club members included (front row, left to right) Marjory Smith, Erica Somerville, Rose Doyle, Gladys Flanagan, and Beryl Bogart; (back row) Libby Day, May Keith, A. McCaffrey, Winnifred Wood, Marjorie Taylor, Julia Mollenhauer, Eleanor Stark, Mabel Menar, and Ethel Holladay.

By the mid-twentieth century, Office Specialty furniture was being sold across Canada and internationally. The name survives today as a label of a successor firm.

Submitted by Robert T. Carter of Newmarket, Ontario. Carter is an author and a former editor of the Newmarket Era.

Do you have a photograph that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in Canada's history? If so, have it copied (please don't send priceless originals) and mail it to Album, c/o Canada's History, Bryce Hall, Main Floor, 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9. Or email your photo to album@CanadasHistory.ca. Please provide a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. Photos may be cropped or adjusted as necessary for presentation in the magazine. To have your posted submission returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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